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JUNIORS

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Absorbed Juniors watching a classroom play.

Frontispiece.

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JUNIORS

A BOOK FOR JUNIOR SCHOOL
PARENT-TEACHER GROUPS

BY

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"The Story of Liverpool's Public Services" ;

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EDINBURGH

E. & S. LIVINGSTONE, LTD.

16 & 17 TEVIOT PLACE

1950

10,462

First published October 1950

14 (27128

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FOREWORD

MR PUMPHREY has set out to explain to parents the chief problems that arise in dealing with boys and girls between the ages of seven and eleven. A great deal has been written about babies, and about children attending nursery or infant schools. Still more has been written about the older adolescent. But the development of the child during the years that intervene has been taken very much for granted.

The old-fashioned notion depicted growth as a rhythmical, wave-like process, sudden spurts succeeding periods of quiescence ; and it was then generally assumed that the years round about eight or nine formed one of the quiescent or "latent" stages, with the child, as it were, marking time. The organism was supposed to rest after the rapid growth of the first seven years of life, and prepare for the new spell of active development that heralds the changes of puberty.

This view contains elements of truth ; but, as usually stated, it is somewhat misleading. During what is now called the junior school stage, child development still goes steadily forward. Differences spread out more and more. The bright precocious youngster who was one year ahead at six will be two years ahead at twelve ; the dullard who was two years behind at six will be four years backward at twelve. Thus, during this intermediate period the range of individual differences will have doubled. Moreover, there are qualitative changes too. New capacities mature ; new interests emerge.

Recent psychological research has thrown a vast flood of light on the peculiarities of mental development during this stage ; and both the curriculum and the teaching methods of the junior school have been modified in consequence. They differ widely in the up-to-date classroom of to-day from what was the common practice when readers of this book and I were ourselves youngsters at school. These unexpected discoveries and these novel ideas are still unfamiliar to most mothers and fathers. Nor is it generally realised that during

the quieter period the foundation is laid for the conspicuous changes later on. The crop of trying problems that so often worry parents when their children reach the threshold of puberty are largely the belated outcome of invisible seeds that were germinating during the preceding years.

There can, therefore, be little question that a book such as Mr Pumphrey has written is urgently needed, and will be heartily welcomed. He himself has had wide and varied acquaintance with children at each of the three main stages of school life. In addition he has supplemented his experience with extensive reading, and has succeeded in putting the scientific facts into simple and intelligible language. I should like to add that in my view not only parents, but many teachers also, would benefit by a study of Mr Pumphrey's suggestions.

CYRIL BURT.

LONDON

September 1950

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT THIS BOOK IS ABOUT

THIS book is written for the parents and teachers of children between the ages of seven and eleven years. This does not mean that I believe some clear-cut change takes place when a child reaches its seventh and eleventh years and I shall naturally overlap at each end of this age range. I write about the seven to eleven group because it is this age group which attends our Junior Schools, and it is in Junior Schools that I have spent most of my teaching career.

It sounds platitudinous to say that in a normal child's life the most important people are his parents and his teachers, but how many parents and teachers realise this and try to get together so that their respective influence shall pull in the same direction, and not, as sometimes happens, in opposite directions, to the utter confusion of the child?

What kind of children do parents and teachers hope that their training will produce by the eleventh year? Any standard set must have broad limits, but in the "normal" child I would examine first his (throughout I shall use "his" when I mean "his" and "her") physical development. I take this first because although physical and mental health are interdependent, we can, by taking reasonable care, build up a satisfactory physical condition in the majority of children. I deal with this in detail in Chapter One. Then I would examine his mental development (this is an ambitious task as the ordinary person has neither the knowledge nor the equipment to do it, and even the expert has much to learn

because child psychology is still a very young science. I would divide this into four broad sections—factual knowledge, the ability to co-ordinate bodily movement and brain, community feeling and moral awareness.

Factual knowledge we can test fairly easily. A child should be able to read suitable books fluently and with understanding and pleasure ; he should have a sound basis of mathematical knowledge and take pleasure in his mastery over the elementary arithmetical processes. His general knowledge should be reasonably good (here I include history, geography, nature-study and the like) and what is more important he should still have a thirst for general information and know where and how to find the facts he wants.

By co-ordinating bodily movements and his brain he should be able to use his fingers and hands to make and mend small things for himself ; he should be able to handle a hammer and nails, a saw, a spade and other ordinary household tools. He should take a delight in drawing and colouring. He should enjoy singing and playing a musical instrument, and should listen with pleasure to good music. He should act without self-consciousness and take a delight in seeing other people act.

Community feeling and moral awareness are closely allied ; a child of eleven should be able to live happily with other people. He should have regard for other people's feelings, and at times he should willingly subordinate his own wishes to the good of others and so learn a feeling of responsibility to the social group in which he will ultimately take his place. He should realise that it is not a question of stifling his own personality but of making a contribution of what he has to give for the benefit of the community.

He should understand that good manners and other social conventions are time-honoured methods of showing respect and affection which help to smooth out difficulties in social

intercourse. The possession of good manners shows that a man is able to take his place gracefully in his community and that he has learned something of the art of living with other people.

And lastly and most importantly I should try to test "moral awareness." This intangible quality, which we can measure only if we are able to observe the child from day to day over a long period, sums up everything else, and here, in this quality, is the proof of whether our training has been successful. A definition of this quality is difficult ; it really means not only being able to distinguish between right and wrong, but having the desire to do what is right. It implies, moreover, a willingness to endure contempt and dislike, rather than abandon a principle that is basically good.

This sounds a tall order for the eleven-year-old, for how many of us can lay our hand on our heart and say "That is the principle I work on myself" ? But after all, an ideal form of behaviour is useless if it can be reached without effort or even reached at all. A child at eleven should be truthful, good in the sense that he will choose to do the right thing when faced with the alternative of right and wrong, and he should, in a broad sense, be able to appreciate things that are beautiful.

I shall deal in greater detail with these things in later chapters.

In imagination I can now hear you saying, "That's all very well, but our John or our Mary is different," and you are quite right, your John or your Mary *is* different, they are different from every other child that has ever been born into this world, and therein lies one of the chief problems of those who would educate Junior children to-day. Teachers are faced with classes of forty, fifty and even more individuals, and somehow, if they are to do their job properly, they must

give each of those children some measure of individual attention and of course, time and space being what it is, this is almost an impossibility. No human being, however gifted, could do it to the extent it should be done. Twenty-five children to a class would be quite enough for any teacher.

But there are other handicaps under which teachers, and through them the children, have to suffer. Many Junior Schools are housed in buildings which are quite unsuited to their purpose. Their design keeps out adequate sunlight and fresh air, and space is so limited that children have to sit all day in badly designed, uncomfortable, immovable desks. Apparatus for teaching is lacking (many teachers of my acquaintance buy school apparatus out of their own pockets) and there is often no room which can be used for games or instruction in physical training. Frequently the sanitary arrangements are primitive and unhealthy. In fact, a large number of these schools have been on the condemned list for many years.

How has this come about? Why has the country's most valuable asset, its children, been so badly served for so many years? Why (and this is the thing that astonishes me most), have parents allowed their children year after year to attend schools in which, in some cases, no self-respecting farmer would consent to house his pigs or cattle?

Although early educational pioneers recognised last century the value of separate departments for Infant, Junior and Senior children, it was not until after the passing of the Education Act of 1918 that this was carried into effect. During the period 1920-1939, large scale reorganisation took place and many magnificent new schools were built, but in the majority of cases these new schools were for senior children. The old buildings, which really should have been razed to the ground, were left for the use of the Juniors and Infants.

Now that the school-leaving age has rightly been raised, new accommodation must be provided for the fifteen year old group, so Primary school children still carry on in their old, ugly, unsuitable buildings.

The Education Act of 1944 courageously faced this fundamental problem of accommodation and it is now the duty of those in authority to provide adequate buildings for all types of schools. It is to be hoped that the mistake of our grandfathers in building schools that would withstand time and any change for many years will not be repeated. Light, semi-permanent structures which can be adapted, changed or scrapped are what we require to-day.

In the nineteen-twenties and thirties, when reorganisation was going on, a valuable opportunity was lost, for parallel development of Infant, Junior and Senior Schools should have gone on *at the same time*. This is not special pleading, it is plain common sense, for Infant and Junior Schools supply the life-blood of the Senior Schools, and if children in Junior Schools have to be taught in classes of forty or fifty, how can they possibly all learn the fundamentals of the subjects which they will use throughout the rest of their school lives? If the children going into the magnificent new buildings which house many Secondary Schools have not had a good grounding, a great part of the equipment represents just so much wasted opportunity, and from what teachers in Secondary Schools have told me this seems to have been only too tragically true.

It seems odd to educationists, but it is a fact that in the eyes of many people the prestige of teachers increases in direct proportion with their pupils' ages, the main contention being that the younger the children the less you need to know in order to teach them. In fact the teaching of Infants and Juniors is a vitally important and skilful task, for at this stage the child's thirst for knowledge and experience is in-

satiable, and, as an editorial in the *Times Educational Supplement* once pointed out, the younger the child the greater must be the teacher's ability and understanding, because the child is less able to contribute consciously to his own education.

As one who has taught Juniors, Seniors and Adults, I have no doubts about which task entails most skill, neither have I any doubts about which gives the greatest and deepest satisfaction.

The past neglect of our Junior and Infant Schools is one of the basic defects of our educational system and we should not rest until this defect is removed. It is therefore the duty of each one of us to see that the 1944 Act is fully implemented.

The school has its importance, but in comparison with the home it occupies a minor position. A child is lucky if he has good parents, for he starts life with an immense advantage. In an ideal State all parents could be good parents, because they would be taught all about parenthood *before* they had any children of their own. Until parenthood is included somewhere in the syllabus of our education (and beginnings have been made) people will have to go on in the bad old way, learning about parenthood after their children are born. It is a tribute to the hardiness of our race that so many first-born children survive a type of rearing which is so much a question of trial and error.

Correct training from a child's earliest days is of vital importance if he is to develop, to the full, the powers that are innate in him. To achieve this, infinite love, patience and self-sacrifice on the part of the parents are vital at all stages in a child's life. Successful parenthood is a skilled occupation which calls for as much training and experience as any other skilled job.

Teachers can easily pick out the children who come from successful homes. They are bright and alert, self-confident

and above all, happy. Children whose homes are not successful present all kinds of difficult problems, for their unhappiness manifests itself in many ways. It might show as an apparent inability to learn to read or manipulate figures, or it might take the form of defiance or delinquency, or lying, or a desire to be constantly in the limelight, or cruelty to other children. In schools where classes are large these children are difficult to help and can be a real trial to the best of teachers, and even when classes are small little can be done if the home circumstances are not changed. Child Guidance Clinics, which are now fairly widespread, are valuable, because they have facilities for helping these maladjusted children and parents individually.

A child is also lucky if his parents have a reasonable income, for pleasant surroundings, material comforts, toys, books and a room of his own can be of great educational value.

Many parents are desperately eager to get the best possible education for their children. Occasionally they are over-eager and push their children too hard. This is a fault which is difficult to curb and often leads to just the opposite reaction to the one desired in the child.

A child receives only a small part of his education in school; he gets a great deal more at home and picks up the rest in the street, from his friends, from the wireless and cinema, and by reading.

If parents do their job properly, they will see that their child learns good things at home. Besides cultivating cheerful willing co-operation and good habits and manners there should be a judicious but unobtrusive encouragement of the right kind of friends, and an equally unobtrusive censorship of the wireless programme, the films visited and the books read.

Later chapters will, I hope, give parents some guidance in these matters.

One of my main objects in writing this book has been to let parents know how and why we teach various subjects in Junior Schools to-day. Teaching has changed since most present-day parents were in school and it is only right that they should know the reasons for these changes. Conscientious parents are often puzzled by the accounts their children give of school activities and are inclined to think that too much time is spent in "playing" in school nowadays.

I trust that this book will do something towards putting their fears at rest, and so make them willing to co-operate with the schools, particularly where the school is forward-looking and, through its methods, develops initiative, self-reliance and independence.

I also hope that this book will form a basis for informed discussion at Parent-Teacher group meetings. I do not pretend to have treated any subject exhaustively and where possible I give lists of books for further reading.

Throughout I have not hesitated to adapt freely from what is still the best book about Primary Schools—"The Primary School," published in 1931 by the Board of Education.

I have confirmed and added to my personal experience by consulting many other books which I shall mention in later pages. I am particularly indebted to the books of Susan Isaacs and "The Young Child and His Parents," by Zoë Benjamin. I recommend these books very strongly to all parents and teachers.

The author's employers, the Kent Education Committee, are in no way responsible for any of the opinions expressed in this book.

CHAPTER I

YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH

THE physical and mental development of your children are fully dependent upon each other, so if you do all in your power to see that your children are healthy, you will be going a long way towards making them capable of developing, to the full, the mental capacity with which they are endowed.

Parents who take endless pains to keep their children well clothed and clean often fail to see that their children receive the maximum amount of fresh air and sunlight, and even more often fail to see that their children have adequate rest and sleep. Similarly, from the yearly reports of the various Medical Officers of Health, it would seem that many parents do not pay nearly enough attention to their children's eyes and teeth.

Before dealing with practical everyday problems I propose to discuss some general principles.

A great deal of work has been done in investigating the development of infants and adolescents, but the seven to eleven stage has not received so much attention.

No two children are exactly alike in their physical development but all children go through certain stages of growth. During the month before birth an infant develops more rapidly than at any other time. After birth the "first springing-up" period takes place during the first year, when the infant grows rapidly. From one to five years he grows more slowly and steadily and this time has been called the "first filling out period." Between the ages of five and seven

comes a second "springing-up" period, when the child grows rapidly in height, loses his milk teeth and begins to cut his permanent teeth. He becomes thin and long in the limbs and loses his baby chubbiness, taking on the characteristic family face. At seven the child's head is almost as large as it will ever be. The cutting of the second teeth often produces nervous disturbances like those produced during the cutting of the first teeth. At this period air sinuses develop in the face and nose, and in the sixth year the feet lengthen rapidly.

The tendency to go thin, which often worries mothers at this stage, is due to the loss of subcutaneous fat.

A second "filling out" period takes place between seven and eleven, when there is a steady growth. Following this period is the "third springing-up" period associated with puberty, and this gradually gives place to a third "filling out" period as puberty passes into adolescence.

The ages for these three "springing-up" and "filling out" periods should not be taken as arbitrary dividing lines, differences must be expected in individual children. Moreover, development at these stages can be disturbed by individual peculiarities of growth, variation in diet, home surroundings and disease.

Certain diseases, it has been found, are associated with the three "springing-up" periods and if an illness occurs during one of these periods when the child's body is already taxed with providing the energy for growth, it can leave serious after-effects.

In the first "springing-up" period, the infants are prone to nutritional diseases such as infantile diarrhoea, rickets, scurvy and digestive disturbances.

In the first "filling out" period and to a greater extent in the second "springing-up" period between five and seven, infectious fevers like measles, whooping cough, chickenpox,

scarlatina and diphtheria occur more frequently than at any other period. Milk teeth too can cause trouble by becoming infected before they disappear.

From seven to eleven, during the second "filling out" period, acute infectious diseases do not occur so often, and this is the time when defects, due to past development, can be treated, and the child's body prepared for the heavy demands that will be made upon it during the third "springing-up" period of puberty, when a child might outgrow his strength and become more liable to infectious diseases.

The muscular system develops most rapidly during the last two months of ante-natal life and again during the latter part of puberty and adolescence. The two bones forming the shoulder blade do not grow together until puberty; similarly the three bones which unite to form the hips do not join until about the age of fifteen in girls and sixteen in boys. It is therefore dangerous to subject boys and girls to intense or sustained muscular effort up to these ages.

Standing erect involves great muscular effort because of the small base covered by the feet and the high position of the centre of gravity. Children should not be expected to stand like soldiers to attention. When at play they adopt a natural attitude, standing with feet apart and knees bent; they also take a delight in squatting. To lessen fatigue, adequate facilities for rest should be provided for young children, especially after the mid-day meal.

Illness, malnutrition and emotional shock can affect growth and development and all parents should be aware of the danger of urging young children to work hard before they have completely recovered from illnesses.

The development of bones is more rapid in a girl than in a boy and this difference in physical development means that boys and girls between seven and eleven have not got the

same capacity for muscular effort and resistance to physical fatigue, and therefore appropriate physical exercises and games should be provided for girls.

A mother's responsibility for the health of her child is a very heavy one, for even before her child is born, her habits and her diet will influence its physique and health.

During the infant's life before he goes to school, his mother will be establishing the basis of a healthy existence by seeing that he has the right food, that he gets plenty of fresh air and sunlight, that he develops good habits in evacuating his bowels and bladder and that he has a reasonable attitude towards cleanliness. He must have plenty of freedom to move and be active and find out things for himself so that he will develop a feeling of independence. He should also be allowed to play with other children and begin to realise that they too have certain rights. The formation of good habits in a child is of vital importance to his future health and happiness.

Fresh Air and Sunlight

The value of fresh air and sunlight is well known, but how many of us carry into practice what we know about them?

Fresh air is vital to healthy development and a child should play out in the open air whenever possible. See that your children sleep with open windows. Lack of fresh air leads to a loss of tone and vitality, the muscles become flabby and resistance to disease is lowered.

Teach your children to breathe through the nose. Mouth breathing is a common habit amongst young children and can be due to the failure to keep the air passages free by using a handkerchief. Teach your children how to use their handkerchiefs and see that they have clean ones of their own as frequently as is necessary.

Deep breathing is of great importance; this will come naturally if the child is allowed to take vigorous outdoor exercise. A child whose posture is bad cannot breathe properly. He should be encouraged to hold himself erect, but do not nag him as this will do more harm than good. See that he is in good health and that his chair or desk is suitable to his size.

Sunlight gives health and vigour to the body and destroys germs of disease. The more you let your children play in the sunlight (heads and the nape of the neck should be protected from a very hot sun), and the more you let sunlight into your house the better. The health-giving ultra violet rays of the sun cannot pass through ordinary window glass, so open your windows wide and whenever possible encourage the children to play outside.

Schools built in recent years make adequate provision for seeing that children get the maximum amount of sunlight and fresh air during school hours, but many of the older schools are very deficient in this respect. Teachers do their best to get the children out into the fresh air by means of carefully planned physical training lessons and games periods.

Cleanliness

The normal healthy active boy will often get himself dirty. This is only to be expected, but no child should be habitually dirty. Habitual uncleanliness can cause, directly or indirectly, many ailments and diseases, for the proper functioning of the body is hindered, skin diseases are aggravated and scratches and wounds might become poisoned. Dirty hands can carry germs of disease to the mouth, while unclean heads spoil the hair and often give rise to sores. Unclean noses can cause the blocking of the nasal passages and lead to nose breathing, nasal catarrh and even adenoids. Unclean eyelids

can cause soreness, and unclean ears can lead to earache and inflammation.

Moreover, uncleanness is unfair to other people, for fleas and lice, which flourish in dirty surroundings, can be passed on to clean people.

Children of school age should, through constant practice, acquire the habit of cleanliness, and at the same time come to understand how important it is for the community that each individual should be clean.

Train your children to have a pride in their appearance and insist on washing before eating. The vital factor in this training will be the example set by the parents, for if they are careful about their own personal habits, and the home and people in it are clean, a high standard is set which influences the child profoundly. Cleanliness does not greatly interest children until they reach adolescence, so the important thing is to cultivate in the child the right attitude towards the habit.

A child's hair should be combed and brushed frequently. Even the cleanest child can pick up head lice, so use a fine tooth comb at regular intervals. Short hair is a definite advantage where cleanliness is concerned.

Training in washing and drying properly will have to be carried out, and it should become a routine that the whole body is washed at least once or twice a week, or that there is a daily sponge and rub down with a rough towel.

Nails should be kept short and clean and if the child is developing as a balanced personality the question of nail-biting should not often arise.

The body should be clean inside as well as outside and a child should acquire the habit of moving the bowels once a day at a regular time. It is a parent's duty to see that the family gets up early enough for the children to make adequate use of the W.C. before they go to school.

The washing facilities in most schools are totally inadequate and it is the exception rather than the rule to have a supply of hot water. Often thirty or forty or more children have to use the same towel, so that long before the end of the week the towel is no longer capable of performing its proper function and is a potential source of all kinds of infection.

When children stay for school dinner we insist on them washing their hands before the meal; the lack of towels makes this something of a mockery. Ideally each child should have an individual towel and under present conditions parents would do well to consider the possibility of providing their children with one. Experiments have been carried out with paper towels and this might, in the future, be a solution to the problem.

Teachers try to establish a tradition of cleanliness and neatness and insist that hands, nails, and faces should be clean and that hair should be neatly brushed.

The school nurse visits the school from time to time and inspects the children's heads. My experience in recent years shows that, in contrast to pre-war years, it is now unusual to find head lice, although nits are fairly common. The nurse advises parents on treatment. If a child has head lice he can be excluded from school.

W.C. accommodation in many schools is very poor. This is all the more reason why parents should see that children use the W.C. before coming to school. Children often waste a great deal of valuable school time going out to the lavatory. The teacher should be consulted if there is a special reason for your child to make frequent visits to the W.C.

Exercise, Rest and Sleep

The parents of Junior School children know only too well their children's need for active movement. Normal children

are almost tireless in physical activity; they run, jump, climb, skip, play ball games, make things, explore and shout and sing endlessly. Their natural impulse is to be doing something with their hands, feet and tongue, for this is their way of growing and developing.

Between seven and eleven years a child is learning to control his movements and can only do this through bodily activity. Sitting still should only be insisted upon if there is some very good reason for it. We should *use* a child's movement, not inhibit it.

For normal development a growing child must exercise the larger muscles of the body; this exercise will strengthen the heart and all the muscles, it will develop the brain, deepen breathing, induce perspiration and ensure that the digestive and excretory organs are kept in good working order. Therefore it is good for boys and girls to play games, learn to swim and take part in sports and activities like dancing. Too many children are content to watch games because they have never acquired the habit of active exercise.

Organised physical exercises can improve bad posture and help the child to develop self-control and a quick response. Physical exercises can also be very valuable in safeguarding the child against the strain which can arise from the more violent forms of exercise like running or swimming.

The less robust child should be warned against strain, especially when competing with other children.

Although playgrounds and assembly halls are often unsuitable or non-existent in schools, teachers always try to take physical training lessons. Here they are able to detect postural defects and when necessary, recommend them for expert treatment. We try to persuade our children to change into vests, shorts, and gym shoes for these lessons. Our objects are:—(a) to let the children move as freely as possible; (b) to



FIG. 1—A recently built school showing a light airy classroom with light movable furniture.



FIG. 2—Galleries have been removed where possible but many remain. Children cannot move about easily in rooms of this type.

save wear and tear of their ordinary clothes ; and (c) to teach them the hygienic value of changing clothes after strenuous exercise. Ideally, of course, shower baths should be provided in schools.

Parents who watch a physical training lesson will see that it no longer has the stiff, rigid form of their day. Now, with the increased use of apparatus and with smaller classes, we try to get freer, more natural and enjoyable movement, encouraging the children to exercise initiative and self-control.

A child's growth depends very largely on his having sufficient sleep ; without this sleep a child becomes irritable and bad tempered and his ability to do effective mental work is quickly impaired.

Most children have to be encouraged to establish good habits of rest and sleep, and early to bed and a good night's sleep should be engrained in the child's consciousness as being essential to growth and health.

The habit should be broken only on very special occasions. In establishing the habit of sleep you must adopt an attitude of calm determination and never show anger or impatience ; if you do, the child will become more resistant. If you have difficulty in rousing your child in the morning, make out a time-table with him, showing the time he must get up, let him have a small clock in his room, call him at the right time and put his breakfast out. If his breakfast is cold and he is late for school, then that is his responsibility. Because he feels that he is being treated reasonably he will usually respond.

Young children should have fourteen hours in bed and the seven to eevens should have at least twelve hours.

A child should go to bed in a happy frame of mind and not, as often happens, irritably, after a family row about bed-time. Do not keep the child up because he does not seem to " go off." If he is kept up he will simply be over-stimulated and

when he does fall asleep through over-tiredness, he will sleep heavily and awaken tired and unrefreshed.

If a child sleeps badly there may be some physical cause, like digestive troubles or enlarged tonsils, or he may be kept awake by some emotional disturbance, like a punishment or scolding before going to bed. Bad dreams, sleep walking and talking in his sleep may be due to digestive troubles or some fright or anxiety. A child should be taught to sleep in the dark from his earliest days. If, however, he is afraid of the dark, be very sympathetic and if he really is in need of a night-light, let him have one. It is quite a good idea to let the child have a small electric torch under his pillow.

The bedroom should be well aired, having an open window and a through current of air. Darkness or subdued light and quietness will help to induce sound sleep.

Young children should rest lying down in the middle of the day.

We teachers feel very strongly about this question of inadequate sleep, because we very often find in our classes children who are just too sleepy and tired to get everything they should from their schooling.

Warmth and Clothing

Children should not wear too many clothes and these should be simple and loosely woven so that the child's movements are not restricted. Open meshed material traps the air in the meshes and so allows for the evaporation of moisture from the body surface, while also acting as a poor conductor of heat.

Clothes should be made of washable material whenever possible. When extra clothing is required for warmth, it should be evenly distributed over the body. Knitted woollen garments are excellent for this purpose. The fashion of

allowing children to have a large part of the thighs and legs unprotected in cold damp weather is very risky.

All underclothes should be changed at least once a week, changes should also be available when clothes get wet or the wearer has perspired freely through physical exertion.

Children should be taught to help in keeping their clothes clean and neat by brushing and proper hanging.

Well-fitting boots and shoes are of great importance and wet shoes and stockings should be changed at once.

Recently constructed schools usually have a drying room in which wet clothing can be dried, but the vast majority of schools have no provision whatsoever for drying wet clothes. Parents will, therefore, be wise if they provide their children with good waterproof outer clothing and spare footwear to be kept at school.

Care of the Eyes and Ears

Between seven and eleven years the acuity of vision is still improving and should not be strained by reading type smaller than two millimetres in height. In the same way, drawing with too fine a pencil or sewing with too fine a needle should be avoided. Accurate work can be obtained from children at this age, but only at the risk of damaging their eyesight, causing nervous strain and spoiling mental resilience.

The maximum amount of light should be allowed to come into the house, therefore curtains should be of a type that can be drawn back to expose the whole window during day-time. Books for children should be printed in suitable type, and when a child is reading or writing the light should come from his left and glare should be avoided.

If your child frowns or blinks, or twitches his face, or rubs his eyes or holds a book close to his eyes when reading, he is probably suffering from eyestrain and needs medical attention.

Good health aids greatly the maintenance of good eyesight. If your child has been ordered to wear spectacles, see that he does so.

If you know that your child has defective eyesight, consult his teacher so that there is no danger of his eyes being strained in school work. Teachers are often able to detect the first signs of such weakness and recommend a visit to the school clinic.

Ears

Children should be told how dangerous it is to put things into their ears, and they should also be warned of the serious consequences that can follow a blow on the ear. Accumulations of wax should be removed by a doctor or a nurse. Discharging ears should receive early, regular and persistent attention.

Care of the Teeth

Children are not greatly interested in their teeth, but if the habit of cleaning teeth can be inculcated it will be of permanent value.

Children must be made to feel that the care of their teeth is worth while and they should be persuaded to take an interest and pride in them. Toothbrush drill should be taught from an early age and the habit of cleaning teeth every night established. No food should be taken after the teeth have been cleaned at night and the toothbrush itself should be kept scrupulously clean.

The chewing of fruit and hard crusts and the rinsing of the mouth with water after a meal should be encouraged.

Fresh air and sunlight, vigorous exercise of the jaws on hard and fibrous food and the taking of milk, butter, eggs and fresh green vegetables help children to resist dental decay.

Reasons for taking care of the teeth should be explained simply to the child and he should be taken to see the dentist at least once a year.

Lessons on the care of the teeth take place in school and there are dental inspections at regular intervals. There is usually a school dental clinic which will deal with defects between school dental inspections.

Food and Drink

Mothers who spend a great deal of their time and energy planning their family's meals under difficult circumstances cannot be blamed if they feel a great deal of exasperation about this important subject.

Satisfactory nutrition is a sign of physical health and depends not only on food but also sleep, fresh air, exercise and rest.

Professor L. T. Roberts, in describing a child whose nutrition is satisfactory, says:—"Such a child has first of all a general appearance of vitality, vigour and interest in life that is characteristic of all healthy young animals. The skeleton is well-grown and strong, with straight arms and legs, well-shaped head and chest. The teeth are sound and well-formed, and are set in well-shaped jaws, with no overlapping or overcrowding. The muscles are well-developed and efficient, as shown by their ability in running, jumping and other activities. The posture is generally erect. There is a sufficient supply of fat to make a moderate padding over the skeleton and muscles and to give the body a well-rounded contour. There is a good supply of red blood, with a normal amount of haemoglobin and red blood cells. The nervous system is stable and the endurance is good. The child is, in short, an efficient, physically fit young animal."

For the sake of parents whose children do not fit into the above description, it must be pointed out that appearances

can be deceptive and that accurate assessment of nutrition is a job for the specialist.

Faulty feeding, which can lead to a poor state of nutrition, may be due to irregular meals, monotony of diet, failure to masticate food properly and an abuse of tea.

The foods that the body needs are as follows:—

1. *Body Building Foods*.—These are principally proteins and are contained in meat, fish, milk, cheese and eggs and to a lesser degree in cereals and pulse and foods like flour, bread, peas, beans and lentils.

2. *Energy Producing Foods*.—These are contained in fats and carbohydrates. Fats occur in milk, cream, butter, suet, lard,

<i>Vitamin</i>	<i>Foods in which present</i>	<i>Value</i>
A	Cod liver oil, milk, butter, cheese, egg yolk, green vegetables, lettuce, watercress, beef and mutton, fat, suet, liver, carrots.	1. Promotes growth. 2. Helps resistance to infection.
B	Cereals (outer layers and germ) pulses, yeast, milk, egg yolk, liver, kidney, brains, cabbage, lettuce, watercress.	1. Promotes growth. 2. Helps to maintain nervous stability. 3. Prevents beri-beri.
C	Green leaves and fresh fruits, especially lettuce, cabbage, oranges, tomatoes, lemons, potatoes, swede turnips, watercress.	1. Prevents scurvy.
D	Cod liver oil, oily fishes, (<i>e.g.</i> , herrings), egg yolk, milk, butter, animal fats.	1. Develops bone and teeth; (absence may lead to rickets).

dripping, olive oil etc. Carbohydrates occur in sugar, cereals, bread and potatoes, rice, parsnips and other root vegetables and oatmeal.

3. *Salts*.—These mineral substances are contained in milk, cheese, vegetables and fruit. Fruit and vegetables also contain bulk of fibrous indigestible material which is of value in stimulating movement of the bowels.

4. *Vitamins*.—These are essential to growth and nutrition and are contained in minute quantities in various forms.

Sunlight on the skin will help to make up for deficiencies in Vitamin D. From the table it will be seen that a diet, satisfactory as regards Vitamins A, C and D, is probably also satisfactory with regard to B. Overcooking destroys Vitamin C.

Water is of vital importance as it transmits all the other substances to the various parts of the body and helps with the excretion of waste.

Food must be mixed, varied and fresh.

How and When to Eat

The digestive juices are influenced by the emotions, so the conditions under which meals are eaten are of great importance. Meals should be served in an orderly fashion with reasonable refinements, like clean linen, clean cutlery and flowers and the whole atmosphere should be one of sociable leisureliness. Meals should not be hurried, for then the food cannot be properly masticated and so will be badly digested.

Digestion will also be interfered with if there is strenuous physical or mental work immediately after a meal. As far as possible meals should be eaten at regular times. Three meals a day are probably best for children and it is not wise to let children eat between these meals.

Bad cooking can spoil even the best food. Good cooking makes food attractive, palatable and digestible.

CLEAN MILK is the most valuable single food known for promoting growth and health in children,

Milk, cocoa, water and fruit drinks are the best drinks for children.

One-third of a pint of milk is provided free at school for each child; this is usually taken through a straw at the morning interval. No child is forced to drink the milk so it might be wise for parents to consult the teacher occasionally to see that it is being taken.

If a child is away from school through illness a parent can collect his milk for drinking at home.

School Dinners

School dinners are a valuable educational aid because not only do they provide good food, prepared by competent cooks and dieticians, but they provide valuable opportunities for training in good manners and behaviour.

Unfortunately the majority of schools have makeshift canteens. In some cases eating has to take place in the classrooms, sometimes tables have to be erected in the assembly hall and occasionally a local hall has to be used. This means that children have to have their meal under the most unsuitable conditions and the teaching of good habits becomes very difficult.

Where the food is cooked on the premises, meals are extremely good, but where food is cooked at a central kitchen and distributed in containers, it is often much less palatable.

In all the school canteens which I have known the children have always had enough to eat.

Children eat very well on the whole, and often those children who cause feeding difficulties at home give no trouble at all in school. There is a natural suspicion of unfamiliar food (*e.g.*, fish pie, macaroni cheese) and there is a tendency to dislike vegetables like cabbage and turnip. Where the children are expected to "eat up" and are allowed small

helpings when they want them, there is a surprisingly small amount of waste.

Dinners are not costly and necessitous children can either make part payment or receive a free meal.

Dinner duty, especially when conditions are poor, imposes a great strain on the teachers. Helpers can be employed, but so few people are trained to handle large numbers of children that helpers who can work without very close supervision are few and far between.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

(a) How can a busy housewife give her pre-school age child the experiences and opportunities for experiment which are so essential for his full development?

(b) How can we get young children to adjust themselves so that they come to acknowledge the rights of others?

(c) What standards of cleanliness should we expect from the Junior child at seven and eleven years?

(d) How much sleep does the Junior child need? We all know how difficult it is to get children to bed, how can we see that they get enough sleep?

(e) What kind of clothes are best suited to Junior children? Should children change for their Physical Training lessons?

(f) At one time children were expected to do fine needlework and carefully formed writing at an early age; can this be justified?

(g) Is it possible to get children to clean their teeth regularly and willingly; if so, how is it done?

(h) How can a mother tell whether the food she is giving her children is adequate in all respects?

(i) Has your child benefited in health and behaviour from taking school dinners?

CHAPTER II

YOUR CHILD'S MENTAL DEVELOPMENT

PARENTS, in the main, are competent to deal with the obvious physical disturbances in their children, and if it is something they cannot handle then there is always a doctor close at hand. But what about mental disturbances?

Adults, through lack of knowledge, time or sympathy, seldom realise what is going on in a child's mind, and when something goes wrong they usually content themselves with saying that the child is "naughty" or "silly," or "a little nuisance," and probably, as a corrective measure, slap the child or deprive him of some privilege.

An understanding of how a child's mind develops would undoubtedly make many homes happier; the often unnecessary disappointment and anxiety of parents would be lessened and the child relieved of much unhappiness because he would feel that his parents understood and sympathised with him.

Nowadays it is possible for parents who are worried by their child's behaviour to get advice from child psychologists at Child Guidance Clinics. Often these experts will be able to clear up puzzling behaviour problems, which, if not rightly dealt with, are liable to do great damage to the child's mental health.

Margaret Ruben and Ruth Thomas, in an article, "Home Training of Instincts and Emotions," in *The Health Education Journal* (July 1947), give two examples of the way in which child guidance problems are approached. I quote one of their examples:—

“The mother of two year old Jacqueline complained that for the last three months the child had had violent screaming and vomiting attacks when put to bed at night—she shared the parents’ bedroom. Once the parents went to bed she was perfectly all right. She also screamed during her daytime rest when put into her cot. These screaming attacks, besides being an upset for the child, were for many reasons an upheaval of the whole family situation, the mother being a housekeeper in a large house where her husband worked as the chauffeur. Discussion showed that the child seemed to be very well looked after and was not left alone during daytime. It struck us that these attacks had started not very long after the family had moved into this house and that the new surroundings might have activated separation anxiety.

“We explained this possibility to the mother and advised her to put the child during the day rest in a room adjoining the kitchen in which she was at work, and, instead of putting her into her cot, to let her lie down on a couch so that she could get up if anything should frighten her. At night the mother was advised to sit with the child until she fell asleep. In spite of some doubts the mother carried out these suggestions with the most satisfying results. In the next interview she reported that the screaming attacks stopped entirely, though she had only to sit twice with the child at night time. In this case though the parents quite realised how easily a two year old child can be frightened by being left alone, and were coping well with this problem in the daytime, they had failed to realise that a totally new environment could stimulate the child to unusually strong fantasies and so aggravate her fear of separation from the parents, in this way upsetting sleeping habits that had already been established.”

It is once more necessary to warn you that no two children are the same and any generalisations I make must be treated

with caution. Nevertheless there are certain lines of general development in children, although they do not always appear at exactly the same age or in exactly the same way.

Some people believe that children cannot "reason" until they reach adolescence and that at this time the faculty suddenly appears. They therefore conclude that children should obey all commands blindly and implicitly without knowing any of the reasons for them. Strangely enough these same people often believe in talking at length to children about the abstract virtues, like honesty, kindness, courtesy and tidiness, thus assuming that the child can reason in abstract terms; they are, of course, wasting their own and their children's time. At what age then does a child begin to reason?

Psychologists have, for many years, been using tests of intelligence and from the large amount of reliable research that has been done, it is quite clear that there is a continuity of mental development from the earliest years and that there are no sudden breaks or appearances of entirely new abilities.

Professor Burt defines intelligence as "Inborn general intellectual ability."

Intelligence Tests

Intelligence Tests set out to measure what a child can do with what information he has. There has, of course, to be an assumption of the minimum amount of knowledge that the child must have at a given age, and therefore, special individual tests have to be used with children who have not had any schooling. But with ordinary children attending school at ordinary ages, the tests do assess the ability to make use of experience.

The tests themselves are standardised. They have been tried out on a very large number of children of all ages, working under similar conditions, and the average performance

of each age group with each part of the test has been found. In addition, the degree of success or failure in each single test as compared with the success or failure in the other parts of the test has been noted. The results of the tests have also been compared with the class teacher's assessment of the children's ability.

As a result of all this research it has been possible to arrive at a fairly reliable scale of tests which represent the norm of mental development at certain chronological ages. A bright child of nine might succeed with a test set for the average child of eleven; this would mean that his "mental age" would be eleven. A backward child of nine might fail to do the tests set for his own age group and might be able to do only the seven year old's test; this would make his "mental age" seven.

When the mental age is ascertained we can determine a child's "intelligence quotient" by dividing the mental age by the chronological age and multiplying the result by one hundred.

Many schools now give group intelligence tests and use the resulting intelligence quotients to grade children. The entrance examination for secondary grammar schools also includes an intelligence test. Where intelligence tests are given by trained testers under good conditions and where the average of at least two tests is taken and judged alongside the children's school work, the tests are of immense value.

In the average person, intelligence develops rapidly from birth to the age of about sixteen; it then develops more slowly for two or three years and after that remains more or less stationary.

Intelligence tests show a very wide range of individual difference and from year to year these differences increase. At five years the range of mental age in normal children is

from about three and a half to six and a half, but by ten years the range is from about seven to thirteen. The recognition of this fact is important if the child is to get as much as possible out of his school lessons. At the Infant stage most children can be grouped together for teaching without harm. At eight and nine, children should be in at least two groups and at ten, in three groups. At twelve, there is such a wide difference that there must be different schools and different sections in each school.

The Senses

The means by which children receive impressions of the outside world are most important.

SIGHT. One in three of the children leaving the Infant School has normal vision, while normal vision is found in about one half of the children leaving the Junior School. In the Infant School, longsightedness is the commonest defect, while in the Junior School it is shortsightedness. During these years, normal vision improves steadily, provided that the child is not allowed to strain his eyes.

HEARING. At seven, hearing is practically mature. Serious defects, however, often arise as a result of illnesses. Children should be carefully observed so that these defects can be treated at the earliest possible moment.

At one time it was thought that children at seven or eight years were unable to appreciate tones accurately enough to warrant a musical education. Now, however, tests have proved that tone discrimination improves rapidly between the ages of seven and eleven, therefore children of eight who sing inaccurately probably do so through poor muscular control and lack of training.

Melody appeals more than harmony to children at this age,

and rhythm appeals even more than melody. The favourite rhythm is that which follows the natural swing of the limbs as in walking, and is based in duple time. It has been found, too, that the major key is preferred to the minor.

TOUCH. This is one of the few capacities in which the child is superior to the adult. From seven to seventeen, touch discrimination decreases by about one half. It is interesting to note that from the age of eight, girls become increasingly superior in this capacity to boys.

MUSCLE SENSE. This is the appreciation of movement and position in our limbs, hands and fingers. Its development is of vital importance in the improvement of manual dexterity and this improvement is one of the great features of the years from seven to eleven. It is therefore of the utmost importance that at this age children should be allowed to feel, handle and manipulate freely.

MOVEMENT. From four to seven, strength improves moderately; from seven to twelve, it develops more slowly, but there is a rapid increase from twelve to fifteen in girls, and twelve to seventeen in boys. Boys show more muscular strength and endurance than girls from the earliest years and this difference increases with age. Therefore in mixed schools it is unwise to ignore these sex differences in games and physical training.

Speed of movement is found to increase steadily from six to eighteen, but the years nine to eleven see the largest increase.

Manual dexterity improves from five to nine, but towards puberty there seems to be a definite retrogression.

The Infant stage is the time for learning to control the larger muscles of the trunk and limbs, while the Junior Stage is the one where the fine muscles of the eye, tongue and fingers are brought under control.

Mental Capacity

What mental capacity should we expect our Junior children to have?

ATTENTION. The limits of a child's understanding are narrower than many parents or teachers realise, and if the child is to interpret a number of inter-connected ideas, these ideas must be few and their combination simple. The child's power of voluntary sustained attention increases rapidly from the age of seven to eleven, but there is still a tendency to over-estimate this power in the lower standards of schools. Children should not be expected to sit motionless for long periods listening to teachers or others talking, neither should they be kept bending over desks, working long sums or reading long paragraphs. However, as Professor Burt has said, "If periods of work are brief but intense, the child's intellectual penetration is sharper than is ordinarily assumed."

Oral work, reading matter, and arithmetic should be limited to a few simple facts, entailing two or three short steps. The length of the lesson does not matter as long as it is broken up and during it the child is allowed plenty of change and freedom to move about, talk and use his hands.

Towards the end of the Junior school period, however, the child should be given practice in maintaining attention by a continuous effort of will, so that he will be able to keep steadily at a stiff task when interest is waning and the novelty has worn off.

FATIGUE AND BOREDOM. As all parents and teachers know, a child is remarkably tireless, and the signs that are occasionally taken to indicate mental fatigue can usually be attributed to boredom and are simply a sign that the child's interest has become exhausted.

The subjects in which mental fatigue might occur are

arithmetic and prolonged reading and writing, but from seven to eleven years, overwork is very rare. Physical upsets, through lack of exercise and fresh air, or through unnatural posture, are more usually to blame.

At later ages, causes of apparent mental fatigue are usually emotional and are not due to excessive brain work. Such causes can usually be traced to strained home relationships or worry over examinations or powerful disturbances of feeling.

MEMORY. This improves at a fairly even rate and appears to be strong in the Junior child because the higher intellectual capacities are comparatively undeveloped or unused. At eight and nine years of age, children show a great fondness for mechanical repetition and advantage should be taken of this, but by nine, mechanical memorization should be in the process of being superseded by more intelligent methods.

IMAGINATION AND IDEAS. Parents and teachers dealing with children of eight and nine years must always remember that although it is easy for them to think in terms of words themselves, children have to think in terms of concrete things and visual images. So whatever is presented or suggested to children of this age must be of concrete, pictorial, visible form and must be closely related to the child's concrete everyday knowledge and experience.

Imagination should certainly be cultivated at this age, but as the child grows from Infant into Junior, it is important that we should help him to make a satisfactory contact with reality by providing him with the means of pursuing his interests. When, during adolescence, there is a recrudescence of fantasy, its risks will be less if contact with reality has already been established.

What images and ideas do our children have in their minds? Experiments have shown that there are amazing variations

and an amazing number of gaps in children's general information. The minds of average children in the upper part of the Junior school are found to have a very limited working content and teachers and others should not forget this.

Two other points are clear : firstly, in the early years the imagery with which children do their thinking has been acquired outside the school ; and secondly, no matter how parents strive to make a child's environment instructive and varied, many things that he sees daily will pass unnoticed. Therefore we cannot assume that the names of ordinary everyday things will evoke in the child a clear and concrete picture of the article.

REASONING. It has been assumed by some people that children in the Primary School cannot "reason," and that only at adolescence does the power to reason emerge.

Reasoning means that not only are facts associated with each other, but the relation between the facts is clearly understood.

The simpler relations like those of space, time, number, quantity, similarity, contrast, etc., can all be grasped by a child before the age of seven, as long as the material is sufficiently familiar and simple and adapted to his limited powers of observation. It is at a later age, however, that these relations are observed spontaneously. Binet's test, in which children describe a picture, enabled him to distinguish three stages : the Infant as an "enumerator," the Junior as a "describer" or "relater" and the Senior an "interpreter."

Professor Burt maintains that the elementary mental mechanisms essential to formal reasoning are present before the child leaves the Infant department "and develop with the extent and variety of the subject matter to which the mechanisms can be applied." Professor Burt is also of the opinion that a child should be taught to think scientifically

and argue logically, the logical steps, of course, being very few and the scientific conceptions such that a child would grasp clearly. For example, it is wise to let children not only "learn" tables, but reason them out for themselves.

Subjects like History, Geography, Nature Study and information subjects generally should all start from concrete things in daily life with which the child is familiar; the aim should be "to fill his imagination with ideas, not his memory with facts, and above all, to enable him to see the world around with an understanding eye" (Professor Burt).

Destructive or critical reasoning develops later than constructive reasoning. Absurdities in a short statement are not usually detected until after the age of eleven. A few very simple logical fallacies can be detected at eight or nine years if they are glaring enough, but children of this age are quite blind to the more subtle forms of fallacious reasoning. This means that ethical arguments leave a child quite unaffected intellectually. If a child has done wrong, it is therefore useless to tell him in great detail of the consequences of his action; this will only provoke quibbles and sophistications, the fallacies of which he is unaware.

SUGGESTIBILITY. Between the ages of seven and eleven a child is extremely susceptible to suggestion, accepting facts, views and methods on trust. This is due to his lack of original knowledge and also to the fact that he is over-awed by those who are older and bigger than himself. The ready confidence that children place in their parents and teachers is an important factor in their education.

Emotional Development

Intellectual processes cannot function to their full capacity unless there is an emotional incentive behind them. A child will work really well if he is enthusiastically interested.

It is therefore important to find out what the child's spontaneous interests are, and whether they can be used as a basis for higher interests which the teacher can introduce.

From seven onwards the child's interests become more objective and specialised and he becomes less absorbed in personal sensations and movements as such. His attention is now attracted by definite objects, particular occupations, specific branches of knowledge and problems of activity.

By eight, mimicking adults, making houses and nursing dolls tend to decline. Whether this is due to some natural law, or whether the children are rather ashamed of these activities on promotion to the Junior School, is not clear. In any case, the more primitive interests should not be repressed too suddenly.

Questioning should never be discouraged. Curiosity, the instinct which directly stimulates the desire for knowledge, is of vital importance and should be encouraged.

Dolls should not be ridiculed, but rather converted into model infants and the growing girls taught the elements of mothercraft. In the same way boys' toys can be usefully employed as a means for discovering valuable principles of physics and mechanics.

The interest in making things is at this age marked, and has all the characteristics of an instinctive urge.

(In writing this chapter I have made much use of Professor Cyril Burt's memorandum in "The Primary School.")

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

(a) Parents and teachers often say that children nowadays "can't concentrate." How far is this true? What should we expect from our children in this respect?

(b) Is it possible, or wise, to reason with a child when he has done something wrong?

(c) Should we encourage our children to read fairy tales and play games of make-believe?

(d) Is it possible or advisable to deal faithfully with all the questions that children ask? Can the busy housewife play her part adequately here?

(e) If we encourage a child to become absorbed in the things that interest him, does this mean that in later life he will refuse to face up to problems which it is his duty to meet?

CHAPTER III

SEX EDUCATION AND YOUR CHILDREN

FEW parents can look back with satisfaction upon the manner in which they learned about sex, and surely none of them will want their children to go through the misery, anxious questioning and emotional upset which they themselves suffered.

Experience in schools—(see “Sex Education,” Board of Education Pamphlet, No. 119, published in 1943)—shows that parents are not only willing but eager for their children to have some form of sex education. But the majority of parents, it seems, are unwilling to approach the subject themselves, either through a feeling of embarrassment or ignorance of the technique of exposition.

Often this means that they leave their instruction until the emotional upset of adolescence makes the approach a hundred times more difficult than it would have been at an earlier age. In addition, when children have not received proper instruction they have usually acquired knowledge from undesirable sources and much damage has to be undone.

Parents who feel themselves in the embarrassing position of not being able to talk to their children about this matter should realise that it is probably due to defects in their own sex education, and they should therefore do all they can to correct this and see that similar upsets do not occur in their children.

How can we give our children this information which is so vital for their future health and well-being?

In the first place, the home should be happy and healthy, with no conflict between the parents. Secondly, the child's natural curiosity must be satisfied at the time it is aroused.

If the parent's attitude is natural and right, a child is sure to ask at an early age—"Where did I come from?" and such questions should be answered straightforwardly and honestly without emotion, on the spot. As you know that the question is inevitable, you will be wise to have an answer ready. Tell him no more and no less than he wants to know at the time; do not be surprised if he asks again, for children often forget what they are told.

If the answers are given with a matter-of-fact directness, the child will not show any particular interest. A friend of mine who had briefed herself very thoroughly to answer her child's questions in this matter was most disappointed at the lack of interest the boy showed.

Zoë Benjamin in her book, "The Young Child and His Parents," gives a good example of how one small boy's questions were answered.

"When he was about five years old he was having lunch, when his mother mentioned something his father had done before he, John, was born. 'What do you mean by born?' he asked. 'Before you came into the world,' she replied. 'Where was I?' was his next question. 'Mummy was carrying you inside her body,' she answered. 'How did I get there?' was the next question. 'You weren't as big as you are now, nor as big as Aunt Lena's new baby. When you first began to grow you were a tiny seed, so tiny you couldn't be seen. And then you began to grow bigger and bigger until you were a little baby big enough to be born.' 'Oh, do kitties grow from seeds inside their mummies?' 'Yes,' she answered. 'And puppies? and baby elephants?' And he went through the names of all the animals he could think of, and then dropped the subject, and did not refer to it again.

"Some four years later they were driving in a car when he asked about one of his mother's friends and was told she had

gone to hospital. 'What for?' he asked. 'To have a new baby,' his mother replied. 'Do you have to go to a hospital for that?' 'Yes, or have a doctor and nurse at home.' 'But why must there be a doctor?' 'You know how the baby grows inside its mother's body. Well it takes nine months to grow—and that's a long time—and all the while mother is eating for the baby and building up the baby's strong little body, so you can imagine that it would be a bit of a shock to her when the baby is born. So the doctor has to look after her, and the nurse has to look after the baby, who is very small and delicate and needs a lot of care.' 'Does it hurt the mother when the baby is born?' 'Not always—but sometimes very much indeed.' 'Did it hurt you?' 'Yes, but I didn't mind because I wanted you so much. I would like you to remember that always, because mothers are hurt when babies are born; and because they carry them about all that long time before, you must always be kind and thoughtful if you know a woman is going to have a baby. You will never have to do such a hard thing, as you will be a man.'

"That finished the episode that day.

"The next time the matter came up he wanted to know how the baby came out. It was explained in this way: 'It comes out of an opening in the mother's body.' 'Where is the opening?' he wanted to know. 'In the safest place possible, between the mother's thighs. You see, nature is very careful that the baby will not be hurt.' 'But the hole isn't large enough for a baby to get through,' he commented. 'No, not usually, but when the baby is ready to be born, the opening stretches and the doctor helps the baby to come out. When the little thing is born, nature makes the opening smaller again until it becomes its usual size.'

"Some months afterwards he asked the intelligent question, 'When do you count a baby's first birthday? Do you count

the nine months before it's born? Or just from when it is born?' He was told that all the different young things were carried in their mother's bodies for different periods and that even some children were born before the nine months, so the first birthday dated from birth.

"The next question arose some months later as they were driving through some drought-stricken sheep country, where some rams and ewes were grazing. 'Why don't they kill all the rams for food and just keep the ewes for lambs?' 'If there were no rams there would be no lambs,' his mother said. 'Why?' he asked. 'Because baby things must have a father as well as a mother.' 'But what does the ram do?' 'Because he is the male, he has the seed* which must be given to the ewe before a lamb can begin to grow.' 'How does he give the seed to the ewe?' 'You have noticed the teat* or penis hanging on male dogs and other animals? That holds the seed and the ram places it in the ewe's body, and then the baby begins to grow.' He asked no further question. Sometime after he was given 'How a Baby is Born' by de Schweinitz, a book suitable for a child of twelve or over to read, especially if he or she has already been told some of the facts. Some time later the opportunity arrived for emphasising the need for the proper care of his own penis.

"Another of the questions he asked was, 'Can a woman have a baby if she isn't married?' He was told she could, but that it is not thought to be the right thing, because a baby needs a father as well as a mother if the baby is to have a proper home and that people had no right to bring a baby into the world if they couldn't give it a good home. He was quite satisfied with this answer."

A child's attitude towards sex is, to some extent, determined long before he reaches the age when he begins to ask questions. Because the genital and excretory organs make use of the same

* This is not an accurate description,

openings in the body it is only too easy for the act of excretion to be associated in the child's mind with the sex organs, and if the mother in her natural anxiety to teach the child regular habits of excretion, continually uses the words "dirty" or "naughty," she is fixing this fact in the child's mind. A child has a natural interest in its excretions. If this is not fixed in his mind by over-anxious correction, the interest will soon pass.

Parents should be careful not to give their children the impression that there is any shame connected with nakedness, excretion or the genitals. In the same way they will save their children from much future embarrassment if, from an early age, they teach them to give the parts of the body and their functions correct names—penis, vagina, navel, buttock, abdomen, birth, urinate, empty bowels, etc.

An early question is likely to be, "What is the difference between a boy and a girl?" In families where children are bathed together, this question does not arise. In the case of an only child the parents will be wise if they arrange for him to stay with friends, where he can be bathed with other children and possibly run about naked for a short time before going to bed. This, of course, must be done quite sensibly and naturally.

The gooseberry bush-stork type of explanation to children is very stupid because after all, the children have got to know the truth some time and if the parents do not tell them they will find it out, somehow, for themselves. In practice, children find out as a result of sly hints and often inaccurate information from their contemporaries. Thus the subject of sex takes on the air of something secret, hidden and forbidden, something rather nasty, unclean and the subject for giggles and leers. In addition, when the child finds that his parents have lied to him about the subject, he not only loses his faith

in them but comes to believe that they are ashamed of the subject and wish it to be hidden.

At adolescence, when children become troubled about the changes which take place in themselves, their need for advice and help from older people is very great. Many children, however, because of their parents' attitude towards sex knowledge, are quite unable to discuss it with them and so have to bear alone their secret thoughts and anxieties.

The age when children ask questions varies between four and seven ; if a child does not ask, then parents should begin to wonder if he has asked elsewhere and received a rebuff or a wrong explanation which makes him afraid to discuss the matter with them.

If your child has not received proper sex instruction, you will be wise to take your courage in both hands and see that he knows what he should know. If a child giggles nastily and is silly about lavatories, etc., straightforward, common sense, matter-of-fact, explanations should be given and the idea that there is anything secret or hidden removed.

Masturbation, which causes so much emotional distress to many children, often begins in infancy. It can be caused by clothing that is too tight, wet uncomfortable napkins, lack of occupation, constipation, worms, or with boys by a tight foreskin.

A child is interested in his body and will play quite naturally with his genitals. If he is scolded, punished or smacked, the habit becomes fixed in his mind because his attention is focussed on it. It is best to distract his attention by giving him something else to play with and seeing that when he is left in his cot or pram, his fingers are occupied by some toy. Above all, he should always feel secure and happy in his relations with the grown-ups round him.

At a later age a child will resort to masturbation if he feels

neglected and unloved or if he has failed in some enterprise, or is worried or distressed. Here the cure is love, affection and sympathy and a happy healthy life, with opportunities for physical exercise and creative work and hobbies.

Punishment, threats and disapproval do more harm than good, only focussing attention on the act. In adolescence, the strain and stress of the change in life, together with the feeling of remorse and shame which often follows masturbation, places a great burden on a child.

Stories that the habit is likely to lead to madness and impotency only add to a child's distress. It is a curious fact, but it often helps a child if he is told that masturbation has been practised at some time or other by most people, and that the habit, unless it becomes acute, has no ill effects.

The importance of creating in the child's mind the right attitude towards sex is of vital importance. The ultimate aim is to make the child aware that sex is not just an animal instinct to be satisfied, but something much more, something which can bring out the finest, or the worst, things in human nature. The only way this can be done is by making sure that the child's home is one where the right relationship of mutual respect and love exists between the two parents. Girls and boys should have an equal status and the old Victorian idea of the superiority of men should be eradicated.

If a child is taught to exercise self-control in all things, he is likely to carry this attitude over into his sex life.

Boys and girls should mix freely and on equal terms. When a boy and girl develop a friendship, it should not be frowned upon and there should be none of the stupid teasing which so often goes on, making children shy and self-conscious in their relationships with the opposite sex.

At a later age boys and girls should get to know each other's point of view and develop a mutual respect. This natural

mixing could do something to get rid of the painful shyness which so many adolescents have to struggle against.

About the age of eleven it is wise to prepare children for the onset of adolescence so that they will not be bewildered and frightened by the changes that take place in their bodies. The Central Council for Health Education helps parents and children by publishing very useful little booklets on this subject:—

WHAT SHALL I TELL MY CHILD? (For Parents, Teachers and Youth Leaders.)

YOURSELF AND YOUR BODY. (For Girls under 16.)

APPROACH TO WOMANHOOD. (For Girls over 16.)

FROM BOYHOOD TO MANHOOD. (For Boys under 16.)

MANHOOD. (For Boys over 16.)

There are, unfortunately, certain influences outside the home which tend to give children an unhealthy attitude towards sex. Many of the poorer films, with their emphasis on sex attraction, showing long embraces, suggestive gestures and clothes, might have no effect on adults, but they are most unsuitable for children. You will be wise to keep your children from seeing such films. Film magazines and some newspapers publish suggestive erotic pictures. It is better for your children if you keep these out of the home.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

(a) Do you agree that children should have some form of sex education? If so, what and how should they be told?

(b) If you feel unable to carry out your child's sex education, where and how do you think that he should be given this knowledge?

(c) Do you agree that boys and girls should have equal status in the family circle?

(d) Should boys and girls be educated together in the same school?

(e) Do you believe that boy and girl friendship should be prevented if possible? Is there anything in favour of allowing these friendships?

CHAPTER IV

LEARNING BY DOING

Making Things

The Junior child's interest in making things is one of the most characteristic features of this period in his life and development. Professor Burt maintains that this interest has all the characteristics of an instinctive urge, and from his enquiries he is able to conclude that during the years nine to twelve, "making things" is the commonest form of recreation.

Thwarting this urge can have nothing but evil results, while the right kind of encouragement will lead to an all-round improvement in the child's progress. Time and time again I have seen a backward and difficult child recover his poise and confidence by being given the opportunity to perform suitable craftwork or drawing. Parents can help here by unobtrusively supplying suitable materials and tools and seeing that presents are *useful from the child's point of view*.

We can learn a great deal about this subject by observing the child's spontaneous handwork. The country boy makes things to help him in his expeditions and mock wars, so we find him cutting and carving sticks for bows and arrows, or catapults, or fishing rods, or blow pipes, or guns for firing matchsticks. The town boy makes wooden swords and erects wigwams and tents and constructs dug-outs and plays endless games of Cowboys and Indians. He also makes fishing rods and nets for catching fish in the local canal.

Although the child is interested in making things because he is gaining more skill in using simple tools like the pocket-

knife and hammer and nails, there is something more to it than mere manual activity; there is also an emotional zest.

At this stage the child is not primarily interested in acquiring or displaying delicate skill. His satisfaction lies in creating something new, all his own. Therefore, if your child asks you what you think of his model, remember that skill of execution is neither necessary nor desirable at this stage.

Sand, mud, modelling clay and later cardboard, scissors, wood, tin tacks, and later still, a saw should be available.

In the early stages he is too restless to concentrate for long, but by nine or ten years he will spend long periods building with toy bricks or constructing models with meccano sets or sawing out models in fretwork.

In school, we no longer make things like mats, brackets, soapboxes or soaptrays, things which need much accuracy and are rather what the teacher wants the child to make than what he wants to make himself. We now ask the child to make models to illustrate various school subjects. Boys love to pull a clock or an electric bell or some similar mechanism to pieces. Where possible he should get the opportunity to do these things.

Home made models teach him the construction of locomotives, looms, revolving lighthouses, etc. The making and repairing of things that move or help him to move are especially fascinating. Scooters, boxes on pram wheels, however roughly made, will keep him busy for hours. As time goes on he realises the importance of measurement and the making of a plan or design.

Girls can also do this type of work and some girls handle the hammer and screwdriver quite as well as any of their boy contemporaries, but their interest more often lies in sewing,

weaving, basketry and pottery. These are linked up with the younger child's play with dolls and dolls' houses, and most girls from nine to eleven love to dress dolls in different costumes.

Towards the end of the Junior period, girls and boys can make simple wearable clothes like aprons or overalls and even knitted jerseys. But no fine work should be demanded before the ages of nine and a half or ten.

Craftwork taught in school should be inspired, when possible, by one of the great traditional crafts, otherwise a great educational opportunity will be missed.

As the Scottish report on Primary Education says, the next fifty years are likely to be a dynamic, rather than static, period in our history, and therefore people will have to be more adaptable, more mobile, more ingenious, more ready to meet novel situations and more ready to master techniques and processes. Dexterity of hand and nimbleness of mind will be more in demand than dull mechanical labour, and children must be taught the handling and experience of tools and materials. This can be begun in the Primary Schools.

Boys should be able to carry out simple repairs like mending a puncture in a bicycle tyre or a football bladder, putting nails in shoes, darning socks and jerseys and repairing toys. They should also have the opportunity of doing a little cooking.

Parents, then, must be prepared to supply their children with tools, materials and the opportunity to use them. They must be prepared to be helpful and appreciative when asked and yet must not interfere unduly. They will, moreover, have to steel their nerves against noise and upset. If father has a favourite set of tools he will be wise if he supplies his son with a similar set. If there is a garden available the child should be given a plot of which he can take full charge.



FIG. 3—Juniors get great satisfaction out of modelling. Here are some nine year olds modelling with powder clay.

Drawing

Boys and girls at the Primary stage take great delight in free drawing and painting, and given the opportunity and materials, will spend many happy hours pursuing these activities.

A child's spontaneous drawing shows very vividly what appeals most to him in this direction. Professor Burt says that with English children the favourite subject is always the human figure and this occurs in 80 per cent of their drawings. Sixteen per cent. of London children's drawings are animals and next in popularity to these come mechanical vehicles like buses, trams and ships. With girls, flowers are a favourite subject and household furniture and dresses are almost as popular.

A small child finds colour fascinating and all children should have their own crayons and paints. Quite early a child will invent complicated patterns that grow under his hand as he plays with pencil or colour. This may very well help to cultivate his decorative tastes, feeling for harmony of tint, and interest in geometrical design.

Your child's interest in the human figure should be given free scope for expression ; lack of realism, proportion and perspective should be accepted and the child encouraged to produce figures depicting action and incident.

Up to the age of nine a child draws not to show what he sees, but to express his knowledge and feelings. He should therefore be encouraged to express on paper his mental images of subjects, places and incidents, from talks and stories that he hears.

At seven or eight normal children are just emerging from the time when their drawings are symbolic, and they express knowledge without caring whether what they produce is realistic. These scribbles and symbols are gradually rejected

and they begin to draw what they see, and intend the drawings to convey a definite meaning to other people. This desire for greater realism often leads to dissatisfaction with their own efforts and they may abandon drawing altogether unless their skill increases or they receive outside inspiration and guidance.

At school carefully designed exercises help the child to develop skill in handling tools and in mixing and matching colours. In the same way studies in colour, pattern making and lettering help, without imposing mature style.

All children should feel and recognise the joy of colour and the pleasure of rhythmic and harmonious pattern. At school practice is therefore given in handling paint, pastel, coloured paper, stuffs, threads, etc. Rhythm is as much felt in pattern making, weaving and stitchery, as in dancing, verse speaking and singing.

If we can get the child to draw visible things like flowers, animals, people, street, shore or field scenes that appeal to him, observation will probably be improved and the foundations laid for scientific instruction in subjects like botany and biology.

A child's interest in the human figure is also used in hand-work, when puppets are made or little figures constructed to add life to his models.

From eight to eleven there is a remarkable improvement in skill in drawing. Later, the child grows shy about his own creative efforts and drawing ability declines. But the Primary child has no qualms about displaying his crude efforts with chalk, pencil or paint brush.

Care must be taken at this stage not to give the child the impression that his spontaneous efforts are not acceptable. If a child feels that you are really interested in his drawings then he will ask for advice and it is then and only then that suggestions should be made.

By eleven years a child should have acquired increased facility in the use of brush and pencil and an increased power of showing on paper what he has in mind. He should have developed skill and taste in arrangement of colour and form and have become more vividly aware of what he sees around him.

Music—Singing

As in the other arts, music expresses deep-seated instincts in human nature and although it appeals fundamentally to the feelings and emotions, it has its intellectual side also.

For children music has a special value, for in its rhythmic aspects it encourages controlled harmonious bodily activity and involves sharing an emotional and intellectual experience with a common purpose in view.

Careful training can help the child to acquire the correct and pleasing use of his voice in singing. A child can also obtain a deep personal satisfaction by mastering the technique of some musical instrument. Through this training he can learn to appreciate some of the work of the great musicians.

At school, your child will learn a considerable number of songs which have a good clear melody. National and folk songs are found to fulfil this requirement excellently. The melodic directness of these songs makes an instant appeal to the child and forms an instructive and never-failing criterion in after life. If the child is steeped in the strong British idiom and musical flavour of these songs, he will have a sound foundation for a musical education.

Young children's voices are not naturally beautiful, but a good teacher will soon get the children to sing in a quiet easy tone and make them realise that if they sing at full strength they are making a beautiful thing ugly. The artist is strong in the child and he can be brought to realise these things.

The theoretical part of music can be taught fairly easily, especially if the percussion band is used to cultivate the rhythmic sense, the beginnings of form in music and the concentration of the mental powers. By eleven years the child should be a fairly proficient reader of staff notation.

When children learn songs by ear they get practice in listening to simple melodies and this learning to listen is of prime importance, for when they do acquire it they can listen with pleasure to music which their own effort will not produce. Children, of course, should not be expected to listen for too long at one time.

Direct instruction in musical appreciation at the Junior stage should be of the slightest and most casual kind. The most important thing at this stage is to arouse interest and provide a good background of musical experience. The gramophone, broadcasts, and suitable local concerts help here. Frequent school performances in which all the children can take part are of great value, while non-competitive school music festivals are a great stimulus, both to the children and the teachers.

Parents here have a very special responsibility, for cheap, ephemeral, unsatisfactory music has never been so easily available as it is now. The wireless, the cinema, and the gramophone all retail it in immense quantities. Parents can, and must, curtail the hearing of this music as much as possible. A veto, however, is not enough; you must put something positive and alive in its place.

How are parents to do this? Well, in the first place, let the young child work out its full satisfaction in rhythm by beating rhythmically whenever he wishes. Sing folk tunes and lullabies for him—if you cannot sing, get gramophone records. Watch the wireless programmes and switch on to suitable music. Encourage your child to sing and later do all you can

to arrange for him to learn to play some musical instrument. Here there must be no compulsion, but if the previous musical training is what it should have been and the child has good precept and example before him daily, he will probably show a spontaneous desire to learn. Musical performances inside the family circle or with friends can be a great stimulus.

Rhythmic Movement and Dancing

Rhythmic movement and dancing bring forth a deep, ready and spontaneous response from children and when the teaching is skilled they will develop the art with great zest.

At the Infant stage, simple rhythmic movements like pulling, sweeping and hammering are carried out, while a response to tunes invites walking, running, skipping and rocking. Changes in time and volume teach the children to listen, and notes with rhythmic names are connected with foot movements, etc.

Not only are children trained in comely posture and movement upon social occasions, but with this bodily bearing and movement comes a spiritual element of deep importance which will show in all the children's activities.

It is only necessary to watch children dancing to see what immense delight and satisfaction they get out of it, and time and time again I have been astonished at the rapid improvement in bearing and gracefulness.

School dancing does not aim at a cheap and superficial "gracefulness," but, as in many of the old English country dances and European Folk dances, at a genuine aesthetic quality linked with expressive, simple and beautiful music.

The custom of boys and girls dancing together in Country Dances should become accepted at this stage. The boys, however, can also be taught the Sword dances of Northern England, and there are men's dances which appeal more strongly to boys than girls.

Many parents send their children to local "dancing schools." If you wish your child to attend one of these you should make quite sure that the "school" is efficient and that the dances taught are desirable in taste, otherwise you might wake up one day to realise that your child is developing into a small edition of a musical comedy chorus girl.

Acting

Children find acting a joyful game in which they will indulge spontaneously. We make use of this interest in school as one of the most effective methods of improving clarity and fluency of speech. It also improves poise and self-confidence and gives opportunity for active literary study providing a natural and effective mode of artistic expression.

Most girls like acting more than boys. Boys seem to be more self-conscious and aware of their own deficiencies, while girls have a love of posing and displaying themselves before an audience. But if a boy is given a suitable part by which his imagination is stirred, he will often put more creative intelligence and fuller vigour into the acting than a girl.

Once their interest is aroused, children will work at immense pressure to learn their parts. I can remember being astonished by the word-perfect performance of a long play by children who had had little more than a week to learn their parts.

In school, spontaneous dramatisation of a poem, a story or a scene in history, is found to be of great value.

Miming has a great appeal for Junior children and I can remember with joy the enthusiasm and pride of a class of fifty backward nine-year-old boys when, at the school concert, they mimed very effectively one of Hans Andersen's fairy tales.

Puppetry and the Toy Theatre also have a well established place in the heart of the Junior child and can be of great educational value.

Parents should encourage, unobtrusively, their children's delight in acting. Gather together suitable old clothes and fit out a property box. This will be worth its weight in gold on a wet day or during the long dark evenings. Take the children to see suitable plays and, where possible, form an appreciative audience for the children's own efforts. If you are asked to take a part in the children's production do so, but if you try to dominate the performance the children will lose all interest in it. Make, or help the children to make, a puppet theatre and puppets, and a toy theatre.

Dramatic performances rehearsed and prepared should be given regularly for parents and friends.

Aesthetic Development between Seven and Eleven

Genuine aesthetic appreciation is not to be expected at this stage, but by the age of eleven it is found to be growing steadily.

In the early years children get a pleasurable thrill from things like brightness, noise, colour, sounds, a definable shape, and a well-marked rhythm.

Appreciation seems to grow largely through bodily activities like games, dancing, drawing, craftwork and anything that springs out of an active interest. The young child loves to reproduce sounds and noises over and over again so that they form a rhythmic scheme.

By arranging toys or other light objects, he arrives at a decorative order and it is through his own efforts that a child first gains an insight into the artistic activities of others.

As his curiosity develops he begins to use intellectual processes in his appreciation; he demands clearness, simplification and even a vigorous idealized statement which his eye can grasp or recognise. This means that he is rapidly reaching a critical stage,

Experiments to discover aesthetic development in children have been mainly confined to studies of their drawings and their appreciation of pictures. Most children of five or six draw by means of symbols, and so we find their human figures made up of circles and other signs. This is partly because their vision is not fully developed, and partly because they have not yet mastered the necessary technique for accurate drawing. There is, however, a real sense of pattern in these symbolic drawings. This sense of pattern continues into the second stage, when the symbols begin to be filled in in more detail.

By nine or ten a child's drawings become more realistic, but while he gains in technique he may lose the feeling for rhythm and design which is the basis of all art.

Preferences for pictures show that in the earliest years a child is mainly attracted by brightness of colour and quaintness of form. Simple patterns (*e.g.*, alternation of two colours) are appreciated early.

The appeal of subject matter soon becomes predominant and the child shows a strong preference for what arouses his interest.

The child's own work is the most potent influence in developing a sense of beauty; formal talks and attempts to arouse appreciation should come at a later stage.

The seeing and hearing of beautiful things, however, is important; parents should see that the vulgar and the cheap (in taste) article has no place in the home, and that the children are taken to see beautiful things, not necessarily in museums and art galleries, but in the country and in the workshops of craftsmen.

Studies of aesthetic appreciation of music, poetry and prose again show dependence upon the opportunities for expression in relation to the child's own instinctive interests. It is clear



FIG. 4—Classroom play with a background painted on brown paper. (This is the play that the children in the frontispiece were watching.)



FIG. 5—Nativity play in the classroom.

also that a genuine appreciation of any complicated form is only possible towards the end of the Primary stage.

Artistic ability and appreciation seem to depend upon two things, the level of intelligence and special aptitudes or talents. These special aptitudes do not develop fully until puberty and in some people they are found to be entirely lacking. Aesthetic appreciation through the ear develops much earlier than appreciation through the eye.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

(a) How can we in our modern homes give full rein to the Junior's desire to make things?

(b) Is it possible to make a list of simple, inexpensive things that children should have to help them in their experimenting?

(c) How can we further our children's musical education? Should we go on spending money on music lessons for children who will not practise?

(d) Should children between seven and eleven be allowed to perform in public?

CHAPTER V

READING IN AND OUT OF SCHOOL WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO COMICS

BY the end of the eleventh year a normal child should have mastered the mechanics of reading, and should be advancing towards that ultimate and vital goal of interpreting intelligently what he reads.

In "Primary Education," a report of the Advisory Committee on Education in Scotland, we find the following excellent summary of what we should aim at in Junior Schools :

"At the end of the Primary stage the pupil should, with greater or less facility, according to natural endowment, be able to look up a word in a dictionary, find from an atlas by using the index where any town is situated, find any telephone number, if the name and address are given, use a railway or bus time-table, find the year of birth, country and main achievements of any famous man from a small encyclopedia, read a simple plan, diagram, picture or tabular statement. He should be able to follow a progressive narrative and distinguish the 'thread' of a story from incidental details. He must begin his training in objective attitude towards printed statements ; examine words and phrases carefully to realise not only what is said, but what may be inferred ; and begin to draw a clear distinction between truth, fiction and falsehood. We believe that the training of children in the habit and method of acquiring information, instead of cramming facts chosen by the teacher, is not only more fertile for the future and pleasanter in itself, but likely to result in the acquisition of far more information than the other method."

And now let us see how the modern Junior School tries to achieve these aims.

By the time a child moves into the Junior School at seven years of age, he should be able to read simple books. If he cannot, then a careful investigation is made, for the backward reader suffers under a very heavy handicap which will tend to retard him in all the other school subjects. It should be kept in mind too that the normal intelligent child nearly always wants to learn to read.

Backwardness in reading can be due to many causes. If the child has changed schools while learning to read he might have been muddled through lack of continuity in teaching. If he has had long absences he might have missed essential steps. Poor eyesight, defective hearing or a speech defect might have spoiled his progress. It is also very necessary to see that the teaching methods used in the Infant School are continued in the Junior School or the child will be confused. There are other special defects to which we need not refer except to say that a number of them are due to emotional disturbances which must be settled if the child is to learn to read.

Sympathy and understanding on the part of the parent is essential ; do not "make fun" of the child or compare him with other children who are "getting on" better than he is. The backward reader is often backward through lack of confidence in himself and he needs all the sympathy you can give him. If you feel capable of giving the child oral practice at home, consult his teacher about suitable books and the method she uses. Often, however, it is better not to interfere, for the teaching of backward readers is a difficult and delicate task.

What about the child's reading out of school? Well, here is something concrete that parents can do for their children. When your children ask if they may read aloud to you, en-

courage and praise them when they do well, and help them sympathetically when they come across difficulties, but make sure that the books the children are using are suitable for their age and attainment or you might be doing more harm than good.

It is important to provide the opportunity for children to read at home ; try to arrange for them to have a quiet period at some time during the day. It is a good idea to read to children, or allow them to read themselves (let them choose) for half-an-hour or so before bedtime.

When buying books for children, choose very carefully, with a clear object in mind, for instance :—This is for John to practise reading aloud, the print must be clear and it must be well illustrated and the words must not be too difficult ; or, This book has stories which I can read to Mary before she goes to bed, they are well written, there are pictures and stories that are not frightening or too exciting ; or, This encyclopedia is full of well-illustrated articles and stories. John and Mary will spend many enjoyable hours looking through this and picking up all kinds of information ; or, I am sure Mary will enjoy this adventure story, it is well printed and illustrated and it is written by (say) Arthur Ransome, who is one of the best children's authors.

Careful selection is essential and your time would not be wasted if you read through the books first.

Certain writer's books are very suitable for children at various stages in their development. The teachers in the Junior School will give you information about this.

At the end of this chapter you will find a helpful account of what children like to read at various ages.

"About Books for Children," by Dorothy Neal White, and "Four to Fourteen," by Kathleen M. Lines, will also help parents in their choice of children's books.

This desire to guide your child's reading must, of course, be unobtrusive and diplomatic ; the result will be disappointing if you try to force a book on an unwilling child.

A child should gradually accumulate a library of his own and as his appetite for reading increases, especially during adolescence, a good collection of books available in the house can be of great value.

What can we do about comics, children's magazines and other ephemeral literature?

There is one immediate thing that parents can do, and that is to see that sensational newspapers and magazines are not left where children can see them. Children read anything that is left lying about and the more intelligent the child the more voracious his appetite for reading matter. The better newspapers and magazines can, of course, be of great educational value.

In "Primary Education," the Advisory Council on Education in Scotland say: "Children should know their way about a newspaper of the more solid kind, including the advertisements, to realise that it is not merely a source of varied and up-to-date information, but a mirror of the myriad activities and interests of a modern community."

Conscientious parents and teachers have many qualms about children's comics and magazines. Children obviously get a great deal of enjoyment out of them and they do encourage children to practise reading.

I am against the use of comics in school because I feel that printed material used in school should set a high standard in written style, setting out and choice of pictures. Comics are seldom good in these respects. I should, however, have no hesitation in using them if :—

- (a) We were short of suitable reading material in school (and this is not unusual).

- (b) If I felt that in particular cases, backward readers could be "got at" through comics.

"Studies in Reading" (The Scottish Council for Research in Education), published in 1948, has some extremely interesting things to say about comics. Working on the five most popular English comics—*Dandy*, *Beano*, *Chips*, *Knockout*, *Wonder* and *Fun Section* (*The Sunday Post*), it was found that 74 per cent of the words used in the comics were either in the children's own vocabulary or in the books they read. This means that comics can provide a valuable supplementary source of reading material. Of the other 26 per cent of the words used, 20 per cent were of positive value and could provide a natural beginning for an extension of vocabulary. In addition, it was found that the percentage of irregularities of language in the comics was only about 6 per cent—so small that it was unlikely to have a harmful effect on the vocabulary of the young readers.

The Safety First campaign organisers produce a special comic for children. From my own observation I should say that this is received by the children with polite interest but little enthusiasm.

The possibility of writing some school books in comic form has not yet been fully exploited in this country.

An account of a successful American attempt to control the material in comics is given later in this chapter.

At least one English comic, which is obviously meant for very small children, prints its words with hyphens between the syllables. This is quite out of keeping with modern methods of teaching reading.

The reading matter in the majority of comics and magazines is badly printed and excessive reading of this print would undoubtedly have a bad effect on the eyes of a growing child.

Most boys' and girls' magazines, with their emphasis on physical prowess and adventure, seem harmless to me. George Orwell in his essay on "Boys Weeklies," has some interesting things to say about this. He believes that school stories like those in the *Gem* (no longer published) and the *Magnet*, although "slow" and out-of-date, are still popular because they have a glamour and snob appeal which feeds the child's fantasy life. The stereotyped characters are of carefully graded types, so that every reader will find someone with whom he can identify himself. (If my own experience is anything to go by I can remember very vividly identifying myself with a character out of the *Gem*.) Magazines like the *Rover* and the *Skipper* are more sensational and include stories about things like death rays, guns, aeroplanes and wild animals. As Orwell points out, there is a danger that the all-powerful central characters whom we find in these stories will lead to bully-worship and a desire for violence. Usually, however, the scenes of violence in these magazines are harmless and unconvincing.

In "Boys Will Be Boys," E. S. Turner gives a fascinating account of the history of "bloods" and "penny dreadfuls." It seems that many of the earlier publications of this type were much more gruesome and bloodthirsty than those of to-day. Whether we can conclude from this that, because no obvious harm was done to many people who read them, they were harmless, is doubtful. Mr Turner questions some of Mr Orwell's conclusions. Parents will find much that is interesting and amusing in the work of both these authors.

There is one type of magazine, however, which I find wholly pernicious. This is found amongst the "American Comics," these magazines which are bought in bulk from America, and are purchased in lots by managers of stores and shops who feel that they have a market for them.

Some of these magazines feature cartoons of animals and children and these are harmless, but many of them deal with "super-men" and crime. The fact that they seldom include children amongst their characters would seem to indicate that they are not intended primarily for children. One common theme is that a man changes himself into a "super-man" by magic and becomes endowed with powers of flight and immense strength. He uses these powers to rescue people from danger or to defeat his enemies by physical violence. The scenes of physical violence are usually quite brutal and the idea that might is right is accepted without question. These super-men fit in with the day-dreams of all children and the danger is that their fantasy lives will be perpetuated so that time will be wasted in day-dreaming which should be spent in facing actual concrete problems.

Other American magazines I examined gave pictures and stories about ghosts, vampires, dwarfs, moon ships, mad scientists bent on dominating the world, and in one case a particularly brutal and frightening giant who could not be killed.

One magazine, which I borrowed from a nine year old girl, was called *Eerie*, and it certainly lived up to its title. The drawings throughout were remarkably clever in conveying an eerie atmosphere. The first story dealt with a madman who kept a tiger as a pet. The tiger tasted human blood and chased his master through the house and into the garden, where the man finally died of fright. The second story told of a man who sold his soul to the devil and showed his last hours when he was trying to escape death. The third story was about the crew of an aircraft which crashed on an island, and told how the airmen were captured by the natives and sacrificed to man-eating lizards. The fourth story dealt with a haunted house, where a man was found hanging by the neck,



FIG. 6—Children changing library books. (No cupboards or shelves were available.)

and searchers were attacked by a madman. The last story showed a man being unmercifully bullied by his wife (with a gruesome close-up of the bleeding scratches down his face); he decided to murder her and pushed her in front of a tube train (this is shown in detail); he was overcome by fear and committed suicide. This bare verbal account tells nothing of the horrible vividness of the drawings.

This type of American magazine is bad for children, and parents should do their utmost to see that their children do not read them.

The history of the American "Pulp" magazines is interesting. They began in the nineteen-thirties during the depression, giving the working-class youth a literature of violence, and young women stories and pictures that were morbidly romantic and sickly sentimental.

In 1938 there was an outcry against what the *St Louis Star* called the "murder, mayhem and arson strips," which many of the American newspapers provided for their readers. As a result of this outcry, the newspapers carried out a purge of these strips. This left the field clear for the comic magazines, whose circulation increased enormously. There are now more than one hundred monthly and quarterly magazines of this type and they have a monthly circulation of more than 50,000,000 copies.

According to one American writer, "Children began to throw down the newspaper comic for the pulp paper books featuring voluptuous women, massive muscled men, horrible death rays and rat-tat-tat machine guns." Another American writer describes the magazines as containing stories of gangsters, G men and crimes that are lurid and bloody. He says that there is no intricacy or puzzle solving to be done by the reader; crimes committed are crimes of brutality with factual articles often illustrated by photographs of mutilated

bodies with emphasis on assaults and crimes of perversion, exploiting abnormality and delighting in violence for violence sake. Humour and adventure are entirely lacking.

This writer sums up by saying that at their worst these magazines have a "nightmarish quality of frenzy that seems to imply desperation in people who read them and irresponsibility in people who turn them out."

In order to offset the effect of these magazines, the Parents Institute Inc., the publishers of *Parents Magazine*, began publication in the spring of 1941 of *True Comics*, a boys' magazine in colour telling authentic historical stories of such people as Winston Churchill and Simon Bolivar. For girls they began *Calling all Girls*. The publishers tell me that these magazines have been so successful that they have started several new magazines for young people. I have examined these publications myself and I find them very good. The material is innocuous and at the same time exciting. It is interesting to find that various universities and teachers' training colleges are represented on the editorial board.

The reading of children's comics and magazines is for the normal child a passing phase, the length of which will depend upon the combination of several factors. Firstly, the intelligence of the child; secondly, the attitude of the teachers and the atmosphere of the school; and thirdly, the attitude of the parents and the atmosphere of the home.

An intelligent child who is emotionally stable will tend to cease reading comics sooner than the backward child. A teacher who is sympathetic and understanding in his teaching of English will, through his inspirational teaching, show that there is good literature in our language which can supply all that a child needs in the way of adventure. He will see that his children have easy access to such books either at school or in the public library.

Parents should also be sympathetic and understanding in this matter; they should encourage the reading of suitable books, see that such books come into the house, show an interest in them and encourage the child to join the local library. You will, however, be unwise to forbid certain books and magazines, because your child will outwit you somehow. It is a good general principle to be positive in all your demands with children; it is a bad policy to say, "You must not do——." You must be subtle and if you wish to forbid something, have in mind an alternative which is likely to be interesting to, as well as good for, the child.

As a child I read comics and magazines voraciously, and I can remember to this day how, at the age of ten or eleven, I suddenly stopped reading them because I discovered to my great excitement and delight, that the public library could provide me with much more exciting and credible tales than any comic.

Susan Isaacs in "The Children we Teach" has some interesting things to say about the Junior School child's reading. She points out how books begin to cast a spell over most boys and girls at this age and how the kind of reading chosen between seven and eleven years shows the general change in their social and intellectual interests.

At the beginning of this period, simple nature stories, in which animals and the wind and weather speak like human beings, are still enjoyed by both boys and girls. More realistic stories of animals told dramatically and vividly are also enjoyed, but the more detached type of animal story belongs to the eight and nine year olds, who will not tolerate the crude talking beast tales.

Fairy-tales like "Jack and the Beanstalk," "Tom Thumb," and "Red Riding Hood" delight the six and seven year olds, but eight and sometimes nine is the age for Grimm, Andersen and Andrew Lang.

Stories of real events also enthrall children and they love tales of children of other lands and descriptions of the real life of animals. Boys and girls show differences here; the boys prefer stories of wild animals and heroic exploits in tracking, hunting and taming them, while girls are more fond of farm animals.

By nine years or even later girls still enjoy the more mature type of fairy tale, but boys are no longer under their spell. Boys become realists and lovers of matter-of-fact sooner than their sisters and prefer stories of boy life and real heroes.

It is at nine years that interest in reading takes its strongest hold. Under nine, children like short tales; over nine, reading is more sustained and many children will read quite long books.

At ten years, fairy tales fall off sharply in popularity even with girls, but myth and legend are still popular and a genuine interest in biography takes root. There is also a growing delight in stories of travel and exploration, which creates a link with historical and geographical studies in school.

The more intelligent boys begin to read books about inventions and mechanics and begin to put some of the "Men who Found Out" into their gallery of heroes along with explorers and Elizabethan sailors and big game hunters.

At eleven, books about machinery, aircraft and the like spread to most boys. At eleven, too, there is a real interest in tales of mystery and adventure. Henty, Jules Verne, Fenimore Cooper and Edgar Wallace become favourite authors of the eleven year olds.

Girls' reading develops on different lines. At eleven, they read the classic girls' stories, such as "Little Women," together with girls' stories of school and domestic life. Animal stories like "Black Beauty" are also loved. Often, however, girls read their brothers' adventure stories, but books on mechanics and engineering appear to have no appeal for them.

Mrs Isaacs suggests that children should have access to suitable books on anatomy and physiology and says that few such books are available. Since her book was published, a number of these books have appeared.

In Appendix V, page 144, will be found the result of an enquiry made into the reading interests of the children in my own school. In spite of the small numbers concerned it will be seen that in the main, Mrs Isaacs' general principles apply to my children.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

(a) Borrow some of your children's English comics ; read, analyse, and discuss them. Borrow also a selection of American comics and compare and contrast them with the English comics.

(b) What do you look for in choosing books for your children ?

(c) Is it wise to forbid your children to read comics ? How could such a prohibition be carried out ?

(d) How would you help your child over the comic reading stage to worth-while reading ?

(e) Do you think that the Junior child should have free access to a public library ?

(f) Do you allow your child to read adult books and papers that are left about the house ? If so, do you think that this does him any harm ?

CHAPTER VI

SUBJECTS TAUGHT IN THE JUNIOR SCHOOL AND HOW PARENTS CAN HELP

DURING the last few years a silent revolution has been taking place in the Junior School. At long last the constricting straitjacket of the Secondary Schools Entrance Examination (commonly called "The Scholarship") has been unlaced. For many years the "Scholarship," with its ridiculously high standard of achievement in Arithmetic and English, dominated the whole of the teaching in the Junior School.

The result was that many teachers felt that their duty to the children was to fill them full of the necessary "scholarship" knowledge, so they concentrated on English and Arithmetic and looked upon Handwork, Art, Music, Physical Training and Nature Study as mere "frills" of little importance.

Teachers who took this view were the victims of circumstances, for very often their work was judged by parents, colleagues and education authorities on the number of "scholarships" their pupils won. In fact the winning of scholarships became a fetish. Given a child of normal intelligence, it was possible for conscientious teachers to evolve a system (based on the analysis of past scholarship papers) whereby a body of information could be pumped in and the child would almost certainly pass. Unfortunately the standard was so high that concentration on it often led to the neglect of the children who clearly could not achieve this standard.

The new type of "scholarship" examination, which has now been adopted by most education authorities, consists of (a) an intelligence test; (b) a standardised test in arithmetic which involves speed and accuracy of working, but includes no complicated examples; (c) a standardised English test which examines the child's comprehension of a piece of writing suitable to his age, and possibly a piece of written composition. These standardised tests have the advantage that the marking by the examiner has to follow certain rules so that his personal likes and dislikes and moods are to a large extent discounted.

When a child, according to his school history, does not seem to have done himself justice in the examination, he can be recommended for an interview for further consideration.

Intelligence Tests do not lend themselves to cramming, although it does seem that a series of preliminary tests can influence the final results.

The standard in arithmetic can be achieved by sound teaching throughout the school in the normal time given to arithmetic.

The standard in English may not be as high as previously when content that can be examined is considered, but it is higher in the sense of a liberal education, and this standard can only be reached by a wide education in reading, writing and speech.

No educationist would maintain that this new examination is all that could be desired, but in conjunction with the school records and the second chance given to late developers at twelve or thirteen years, it is infinitely better than the old type of examination.

Whether a child's future education can or should be decided at eleven years is very questionable, for there is no evidence to show that special abilities and interests which may be of

great importance in adolescence and adult life have developed sufficiently to be measured accurately.

The best results will undoubtedly be achieved by a careful study made of each child throughout his school life, by means of record cards which will indicate as far as possible his temperament, mental processes, hobbies and attitude towards others.

In the past many employers gave preference to children who had attended a secondary school, even if they did not get their "School Certificate." This meant that parents made every effort to give their children a secondary education; but whether all the children who attended secondary schools were happy there and received an education suitable to their capabilities is doubtful. Many would have been much happier and ultimately much better citizens had they been allowed to follow their natural bent at technical schools or as trade apprentices.

A friend of mine who teaches in an old established grammar school confirmed this point of view when he told me that he and his colleagues are of the opinion that many of the failures amongst their pupils came from the Junior Schools where the children were pushed through their "scholarship" examination by means of expert cramming.

The same friend, who teaches science to the sixth form, is exasperated and distressed by the lack of independence and initiative shown by his seventeen year old boys. He says that when he makes an outrageous statement to shock and stimulate them they are quite unmoved and take it as gospel truth. It is to be hoped that when the boys, taught under the new Primary School system, reach his form he will find a change in attitude.

The Scottish Report on Primary Education, published at the end of 1946, has some interesting things to say about the

subjects of the curriculum. "We discard," it states, "with little regret the narrow and obsolete view that reading, writing and arithmetic are the three fundamentals of education . . . If it is necessary . . . to talk about any subject being more fundamental than another, we would suggest tentatively, and as a basis for clearer thinking on the subject, that the three fundamental subjects are physical education, handwork and speech."

The report goes on to point out that Physical Education includes healthy environment, feeding, medical examination and treatment, good personal habits and a knowledge of hygiene as well as suitable physical exercises and games.

Handwork includes anything done by the human hand. It involves measurement and calculation ; includes all industries, many sciences and the arts of the painter, the sculptor, the architect and the musician. Handwriting is only one of the many divisions of handwork.

Speech or language is the foundation of all human communication of thought and memory. Reading, oral or silent, depends on speech and from speech and the written word have developed the accumulations of fact to exercise the mind on the meaning of history and life and to express in literature the vision and imaginings of the human soul.

It must not be thought, however, that the three Rs can be neglected, for the mastery of these subjects is the indispensable foundation for future work and this should be obtained through a regular and systematic practice with this single aim in view.

In the early days of popular education when children left school young, the reason for the concentration on the three Rs was obvious, for in those days the real business of life was picked up outside school. Nowadays, with the immense changes brought about by industrialisation, the schools have been compelled to broaden their aims, and now they have not only to

teach reading, writing and arithmetic, but also how to live. Teaching, therefore, must (in the words of "The Primary School") "help children directly to strengthen and enlarge their instinctive hold on the conditions of life by enriching, illuminating and giving point to their growing experience."

And as the same report goes on to say:—"We see that the curriculum is to be thought of in terms of activity and experience rather than of knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored. Its aim should be to develop in a child the fundamental human powers and to awaken him to the fundamental interests of civilised life so far as these powers and interests be within the compass of childhood, to encourage him to attain gradually to that control and orderly management of his energies, impulses and emotions, which is the essence of moral and intellectual discipline, to help him to discover the idea of duty and to ensure it, and to open out his imagination and his sympathies in such a way that he may be prepared to understand and to follow in later years the highest examples of excellence in life and conduct."

The teacher's task is twofold: he must know his pupils so that he can secure their willing and active co-operation, and he must have the skill to adapt his teaching methods to particular individuals and circumstances.

Human beings learn in three main ways:—

- (a) by a teacher's suggestion.
- (b) through demonstration or exposition by a teacher or a book.
- (c) by actual experimentation.

Large classes in the past made it necessary for teachers to depend on demonstration and exposition, but there are limits to the usefulness of this method, and few people will now deny that children should, as far as possible, be allowed to proceed

at their own pace, and that there should be an increase in the opportunities for the children to carry out experimentation by themselves.

During the last few years, some Junior Schools have been experimenting with activity methods which allow the child to choose a subject and pursue his interest in it until he has exhausted all its possibilities.

The opportunities thus given for exercising initiative must, of course, be introduced gradually, but the ultimate improvement in independence, poise and natural abilities has proved that the method has great possibilities. M. V. Daniel, in "Activity in the Primary School," gives the result of actual experiments in this form of activity. The book will interest all conscientious parents and teachers.

THE PROJECT METHOD

One very successful method which gives what the child learns a vitality and significance that is not often reached in the routine lessons of the week is the Project method. This method can be varied, but usually some centre of interest is selected and for a while the children's studies along many lines converge upon it or radiate out from it.

In my own school we based a project on the district around the school. The seven and eight year olds dealt with the school and its visitors, they made models of the classroom and the immediate surroundings of the school. The policeman, the postman, the dustman, the milkman, the school nurse and the attendance officer came to school and spoke to the children about their jobs.

The nine year olds adopted a local farm, visited it and made models of it.

The ten year olds found out all about the legends and stories (which they dramatised) connected with the nearby forest. They visited the museum and the local timber yard and iron foundry. They made models and drew and painted maps, plans and pictures.

The eleven year olds were in two groups ; the first group dealt with transport and built models of the local railway halt and bus station, making excellent replicas of buses and trains. They also had the thrill of being spoken to by a real engine driver. Visits were paid to the station goods yards, a signal box and a motive power unit.

The second eleven year old group examined the local industries and concentrated on brick-making. They visited the local brick works and received a return visit from the brick works engineer, who spoke to them and answered their questions.

All the children wrote letters of thanks to the outside people who willingly helped us (and incidentally some of these outside people got a tremendous kick out of talking to the children). Descriptions were written and pictures drawn and painted. Model-making invoked the aid of arithmetic, and books of reference were used constantly for specific information. A great deal of history and geography was learned and the children gained a real insight into local people's jobs. Each class elected a representative who reported their findings to the whole school, and any of the children would, given encouragement, speak at length on any aspect of the project.

Whatever method of teaching is adopted, it will always be dependent on the personality and ability of the teacher. If the teacher is good, any method has a reasonable chance of success ; if the teacher is incompetent no method will compensate for his lack of skill and vocation for teaching.



FIG. 7—Seven and eight year olds' model of the district around the school.



FIG. 8—Nine and ten year olds' model of the local timber yard.



FIG. 9—Model ships made when the story of ships was used as centre of interest.



FIG. 10—Shopping at the toyshop constructed as a centre of interest.

Facing page 69.

I now propose to discuss briefly the various subjects of the Primary School curriculum. Although these subjects appear under individual headings, it should be remembered that in practice they are difficult to disentangle in the modern Junior School.

Because teaching methods are bound to vary from school to school and teacher to teacher, I have largely built up what follows from "The Primary School," which is still slightly more progressive than the majority of schools, but not quite as progressive as the more ardent pioneers who are doing such excellent work to-day.

Physical Education, Handwork, Music, Art, Dramatisation and Reading have been discussed elsewhere in this book.

English

In teaching English to Juniors our aim is to form correct habits of speaking and writing, and not to give an abstract and analytic study of language.

A child should learn to read and understand modern English prose containing words in ordinary use; he should gain fluency in expressing his own thoughts and should obtain some power of private study and the ability to summarise his acquired knowledge. He should be able to spell all the words he normally uses, and although oral expression will occupy a place of greater importance than written English exercises, he should be able to arrange in order and set down in writing his ideas on simple and familiar subjects.

In literature he should have some acquaintance with English lyrical poetry and good prose fiction suitable to his age. By repeating good English verse and prose and by listening to the teacher reading it, he should be helped to acquire correct pronunciation and a distinct enunciation. The teaching of English is involved in the teaching of all the other school

subjects, and without good habits of speech and writing, a child's progress in subjects, both scientific and literary, will be seriously affected.

Speech

During the Junior School period the acquiring of good speech habits is more important than the acquiring of good writing habits.

In the Infant School, children are encouraged to express themselves freely on everything that comes within their range of experience. This practice should be continued in the Junior School.

Towards the end of the Junior School, however, children become more reserved and are less ready to talk, so the teacher must exercise great skill in choice of subject and the encouragement of individual children.

Devices used by teachers to get free, eager and willing speech include such things as puppetry, mock broadcasts, toy theatres, discussions, quizzes, and the giving of directions. A centre of interest always gives scope for discussions and verbal reports.

Parents can help here. Be sensible about encouraging your children to talk, for you can help a great deal in overcoming their growing self-consciousness. The saying, "Children should be seen and not heard," if it is carried into practice, is wicked and unnatural.

Where there is a genuine local dialect, teachers do not decry it but aim to develop alongside it what is known as Standard English. In teaching this Standard English, the most powerful influence is the teacher's own language and pronunciation.

Lazy, slovenly speech should not be confused with the speaking of dialect.

Parents can be of great assistance in speech training. It

happens occasionally that the work of the school in teaching Standard English is undone by parents who mock their children when they try to use it at home. Children will imitate their parents' speech and if parents speak well, so will their children.

Spelling

Accuracy in spelling is primarily acquired through reading. Pupils who are good at spelling appear to see the words in the mind's eye, so in the majority of cases words that are wrongly spelt are best corrected by being written out many times.

Weakness in spelling, however, may be due to many causes, and teachers have to devise appropriate means for dealing with these, especially for those children who are unable to visualise the form of the word in their minds.

A certain amount of drill can be very useful as long as the word lists are based on frequency counts and the words are grouped in small units according to a rational plan such as that used by F. J. Schonell in his *Essential Spelling Lists*.

Children who read widely are seeing common words frequently and are thus able to visualise them when they have to be spelt. So encourage your children to read as much as possible out of school.

Written Composition

Good oral work is the basis for written composition, and in the early years the periods given to written work should be short and the topics of immediate interest to the children. In the later stages of primary education, narrative, description, some exposition and some argumentation should be included. Abstract and general topics, however, should be avoided.

If a child's composition is interesting, it is good; if it shows

that the child has looked at his subject intelligently and acutely, it should be given high value.

When a child is pursuing a topic or centre of interest he must do a certain amount of writing; this gives purpose to his written work, which often improves immensely.

When your child writes a letter at home or produces any other piece of writing, you should judge it by content and not by the mistakes. The mere avoidance of mistakes is not merit, and some mistakes even deserve credit, as when a child tries to use a word or construction to express a more subtle idea and does not get it quite right.

Literature

Traditional stories in good English are enjoyed by children and remembered in later years. In the early stages it is undesirable to emphasise prematurely a purely literary point of view. The main object should be to get the child to read fluently and with pleasure.

To the early simple rhymes should be added suitable poems dealing vividly with action and narrative, and traditional ballads should have an important place in the Junior School.

The poetry and literature selected for the children must be the best of its kind, hard words will have to be explained with a skill which avoids wearying the pupil, while in poetry it is important that the poem as a whole should have a meaning for them.

Literature and poetry can only be really well taught by a teacher who is able to inspire his pupils; we believe that these subjects are caught rather than taught.

Dramatic work and reading, which are inseparable from the study of literature, are dealt with elsewhere in this book.

Parents should see that there is a good supply of suitable books available; they should also encourage their children to

listen to the radio when suitable stories and poetry are being read.

Grammar

Generally speaking, pupils learn to write and speak correct English by imitation and practice, but an irreducible minimum of pure grammar should be taught as part of the English course.

Up to the age of eleven, English grammar should be acquired by actual contact with the language and by acquaintance with the grammatical terms that are necessary to explain the difference between accuracy and inaccuracy in use. Nevertheless in order to use the language properly the pupil must make some study of the way in which language does its work.

The grammar taught should be used constantly in the intensive study of passages treated as models of writing.

History

For the teaching of history in the Junior School we draw on our national store of rich and varied literary sources for our supply of suitable subject matter.

Bible stories, classical narratives, mediaeval romances, stories of exploration, travel and invention are obvious instances.

The danger of this method is that in the child's mind history becomes a mere jumble box. This can only be avoided by the suitable selection of topics and subject matter connected with them.

By the end of the Junior School period it is usual to base the course on topics selected from British history. Pictures, historical monuments and historical objects in museums all have an important part to play. Drawing and hand work must be used constantly.

By the time a child leaves the Junior School, he should be able to read a simple history book with some real understanding and its main outlines should not be unfamiliar to him. In addition he should have a lively sense of the bearing of history upon his everyday life and environment.

The illustration on page 69 shows the model ships made by a class of children who chose the development of ships as a centre of interest. They made these models with great enthusiasm and learned incidentally an enormous amount about the people who sailed in them through the centuries.

Parents can help in stimulating their children's interest by taking them to visit historical monuments and museums, answering their questions and supplying them with suitable books and pictures.

Geography

The method by which many parents were taught geography is so different from our present methods that it is well to sum it up in the words of "Suggestions to Teachers"—Geography as other subjects must "be thought of in terms of activity and experience rather than of knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored, though due regard will be paid to the stimulation of the imagination by means of vivid description."

Certain geographical facts must be learned, but the mere learning of those which are not connected with known realities has little value.

It will be seen that the "project method" already described has great possibilities in teaching geography.

Folk tales and stories of people of other lands are one obvious means of interesting young children, and all the time a child is out of school he is learning geography. His journey to school teaches him place and movement, while such terms as "hot," "cold," "high," "low," "wet" and "dry" will

all be interpreted by the child in terms of what he has seen and felt.

Experience in local geography will supply the initial means whereby the rest of the world may be understood. Continual reference has to be made to what the children already know if interest in geography is to be kept alive and real, and intelligent curiosity stimulated.

Maps must be used and understood, and the cardinal points will have to be learned to fix position.

Use should be made of weather observations, the apparent movement of the sun, cold and warm winds, the weather vane, wet and dry weather, etc.

When stories are told of children of other lands, pictures will be used so that by the age of nine the child should have some conception of the more strongly contrasted regions of the world. At this age, provided that the child has been taught to use simple maps, the globe can be introduced. Work can then become more systematic and the children obtain some kind of conception of the world as a whole.

While no attempt should be made to cover the whole world in outline, the majority of pupils by the age of eleven will have acquired a knowledge of the position of the continents, oceans, most important countries, chief mountain ranges and a few of the most important towns.

The study of the local region should be extended to include a simple study of the principle geographical regions of the British Isles, and it should not be difficult by the end of the Primary stage to show pupils how these regions are interrelated.

Parents can give a great deal of help in geography by being prepared to answer all their children's questions, by seeing that their children get out into the country, and by seeing that when a family expedition is planned, geographical features are unobtrusively brought to the children's notice. Good pictorial

children's encyclopaedias and maps should be available in every home ; a child will spend hours poring over them.

Arithmetic

Far too much time in the past has been given to arithmetic in Junior Schools. This, of course, was a direct result of the importance attached to it in the "Scholarship" examination. It is now possible for the normal child to cover the arithmetic course without pressure and without loss of thoroughness with a considerable reduction of the time that was once given to the subject.

In the Junior School we are mainly concerned with teaching the fundamental processes or rules, and it is one of our most difficult problems to secure a thorough mastery of these basic operations without devoting too much time to them and without making the child hate the subject.

These basic operations should include a working knowledge of the systems of notation for integral and fractional numbers and their written forms, a sound knowledge of the weights and measures in ordinary use, and the four processes in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division as applied to numbers, whole and fractional, and to money, weights and measures.

By handling geometrical figures the children should acquire a knowledge of the simpler properties of spacial figures, plane and solid, and learn to use correctly the word associated with them. They should also form clear concepts of area and volume through measurements of the simpler regular figures.

It is essential that the fundamental processes of arithmetic should become automatic before the child leaves the Junior School. He must, for his own good, be able to add, subtract, multiply and divide accurately, quickly and without hesitation. He must know his addition and multiplication tables through and through and in such a way that each item springs to

his mind without reference to any nearby part of the "table."

It is most important to apply arithmetic to matters within the child's environment. With many, the home experience will be of great value, and when the school has systematised the child's ideas of shape, size and weight, parents should encourage children to make practical use of them. To achieve this the child must know his tables of money, weight, length, area, capacity and time. But mere mechanical knowledge of tables is not enough, the child must have some real experience of the things involved and they must be definite realities in his mind. Simple fractions should present no difficulty for they are familiar to children long before the age of seven. Decimal notation and the connection between decimals and vulgar fractions should be noticed, but the metric tables as a whole should not be included.

The formation of good habits of computation and procedure are essential, but mechanical drill is not sufficient. The arithmetical tools we have put into the children's hands must be used. The problems we give children should, however, be quite simple, involving no large numbers and only two or three steps in argument. They should also be related to ordinary transactions in daily life.

Some children are capable of doing more than learning these fundamental processes. These children, of course, should not be allowed to "mark time," they should go forward and do the new work of which they are capable.

Parents should encourage their children to count, measure, play shop, and go shopping with real money.

The illustration on page 69 shows a Toyshop centre of interest. The children made the toys, priced and labelled them and then used the shop for buying and selling with imitation coins. Bills were made out and the children took

turns in being the shopkeeper. There was great enthusiasm and a determination to make no mistakes in calculation.

Nature Study

In Nature Study, the necessary grasp of essentials can only be attained by the child handling living things and becoming aware of the order and method required for successful cultivation. The school garden should be used to the full for observing seasonal changes and experimenting with growing plants of all kinds.

Nature rambles and walks will acquaint children with the ways of animals, birds and pond and plant life. The enthusiastic teacher awakens an enquiring interest in her children, and by experiment helps them to record the changing face of the countryside as the seasons progress.

Over-elaborate botanical studies have no place in the Junior School. Aquariums and breeding cages for insects should be kept and on occasion children should be encouraged to bring their pets to school.

Children can keep gardening and nature diaries and so learn to build up a record of their observations.

Teachers in towns have a more difficult task, but they can see that there are flowers in school and that observations of the weather are made on weather charts. Plants and trees in nearby gardens can be examined, butterflies and moths can be reared and the habits of town birds examined. Bulbs, corms and seedlings, etc., can be grown in school. Aquariums can be kept and nature tables maintained.

Nature Study will form the main part of the work in science in the Junior School, but other topics closely related to the children's interests and natural curiosity should be included. "How it works" is a good practical guide for the teacher in this early work,



FIG. 11—Learning out of school. A farmer explains how weeds are fought.



FIG. 12—Children see for themselves how pond creatures and plants live.

No attempt should be made to build up an organised body of science at this stage. The aim should be to interest the children in just those physical phenomena which they meet in their ordinary daily life.

Parents can help here by seeing that their children get out into the country at every opportunity, and again they must be prepared to answer all the questions put to them. Encourage the keeping of pets (if you have sufficient room). Let your child have a piece of garden for which he is solely responsible. If you have no garden make window boxes or utilise flower pots. Try to get together as many books as possible dealing with birds, flowers, plants and animals, and encourage the children to refer to them.

Handwriting

The print script handwriting which is taught in the majority of infant schools has the two great advantages of simplicity and legibility.

Pencils and pens are awkward things to hold and children have to gain a considerable degree of muscular control before they can be expected to write well.

The transition to cursive writing is achieved much more satisfactorily if it is done by slow degrees, while the change from pencil to ink should also be introduced gradually.

The criterion of good writing is that it should be legible and clear. The style should be such that the writer can attain sufficient speed to put down his thoughts without undue delay. Apart from this the actual details of style do not matter. Marion Richardson writing with its preliminary pattern work provides an excellent basis for a writing scheme.

If a child feels that what he is writing is worth while he will work hard to make his writing neat and legible. I have found that when children are preparing a booklet in

connection with a centre of interest or project, their writing often improves.

Parents can do little here besides setting a good example in their own writing and praising their children's efforts when they think them good.

Religious Instruction

Instruction in this important subject is carried out through the medium of (a) the School Assembly; (b) Scripture lessons; (c) the general atmosphere of the school.

The School Assembly, which usually takes place at the beginning or the end (or both) of the school day, is a most important function, its atmosphere setting the standard for the whole day. This simple ceremony varies from school to school, but usually hymns are sung, prayers repeated and perhaps a child reads a passage from the Bible. This act of corporate worship draws the school together, giving the children a religious experience and a feeling of respect for the school and its traditions.

The importance that parents attach to Scripture lessons is shown by the fact that so few of them exercise their right to withdraw their children from them. It would seem that the large number of parents who are indifferent or even antagonistic to organised religion are still willing for their children to receive instruction in the Scriptures.

These lessons are usually based upon a set syllabus which has been adopted by the particular Education Authority. These syllabuses, which are undenominational, are drawn up by sincerely religious people who believe in the vital importance of such lessons.

The teacher's object is not to instruct (and still less to moralise) but to discuss freely the problems of the religious and moral life.

A child at an early age begins to face problems of right and wrong, and there is no doubt that he thinks deeply about moral problems. He does not always ask questions about these things and we should respect his private thoughts, but there are things about which he is puzzled and about which he will only question someone he trusts implicitly. He needs these explanations for he must establish a standard upon which he can base his values. If the teacher can help him to establish a good set of values he will be performing a function of the utmost importance.

The life of the school, the example set by the teachers and the standards of conduct expected of the children, are all of vital importance.

Here again it is most important to see that there is close co-operation between home and school. If the standards set at home are different from those set in school, not only will the child be confused and unhappy, but outright antagonism is likely to be aroused.

As "Primary Education," the report of the Advisory Council on Education in Scotland says :

"In the course of religious instruction, a good deal of actual knowledge will be absorbed: but that is not the purpose of religious instruction. Many noble texts and passages will be memorised, but that again is not the purpose of religious instruction. The only valid and final objective is to train the child to listen to the still small voice. We speak much in these days, and we speak rightly of the importance of security for the child. But he must in time outgrow these temporary protections of childhood and find security in his own soul and its Divine relationship. All religious teaching must find its justification in the development of a character that is adequately equipped to meet the chances and crises of life."

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

(a) Do you think that children "play" too much in school nowadays? What do you mean by "play" here? Does the new approach achieve its object?

(b) Do you think that the system of "slogging away" at English and Arithmetic had anything to recommend it?

(c) How can parents help their children in the learning of English? (Reading, writing and speech).

(d) What do you wish your child to get from his religious instruction lessons in school?

(e) We all want our children to "get on." Do you think that gaining a place in a grammar school is the best way for your child to get on?

(f) Are there any extra subjects which you think should be taught in school? Are there any subjects which you think should be dropped from the curriculum?

CHAPTER VII

YOUR CHILDREN AND FILMS

(With special reference to the Saturday Morning Cinema)

YOU are an unusual person if you have never been carried away by a film you have seen in the cinema. The majority of cinema-goers have at some time felt a lump in their throats or tears in their eyes or a rising excitement during a dramatic scene or a thrilling chase. And how many, I wonder, have had to reassure themselves by thinking, "After all it's only a film"?

A middle-aged gentleman in a responsible public post told me a short time ago that he "weeps like a child," if he sees a pathetic film. And all of us have seen ladies emerging from the cinema with red and swollen eyes.

J. P. Mayer in "Sociology of Film," records that one young lady in answer to his questionnaire replied, "Life would be empty without the pictures." When we look around at our acquaintances I am sure we must admit that this is no isolated instance and that many people would find "life empty" without the cinema.

In Britain and America, 25,000,000 and 85,000,000 people respectively go to the cinema weekly. Margaret Thorp in her book, "America at the Movies," shows how the American housewife and typist find in the films the fulfilment of their dreams of luxury and romance, and how they base their

fashions in clothes and hairdressing and standards of kissing and lovemaking on a direct imitation of Hollywood patterns.

During Christmas 1938, says Margaret Thorp, the toy department stores of New York, Brooklyn and Chicago substituted the Lone Ranger for Santa Claus, and from this she goes on to show that a new mythology of the movies is replacing the folk lore of fairy tales and the Old Testament characters. Children must have gods and goddesses, heroes, giants, witches and good fairies. Are we going to find that in time, Jack the Giant Killer and David and Goliath will give way to Donald Duck, Popeye, the Big Bad Wolf and the Brave Little Pig? Is it possible that Betty Grable will take the place of Goldilocks and the Sleeping Beauty and that Tyrone Power will replace the brave third son?

I do not wish to go into the reasons for the extraordinary power that the films exert, I simply wish to point out that if films exercise such a potent influence on the presumably mature minds of adults, how much more potent must the effect be on the immature minds of children, for we all know that in spite of the "A," "U," and "H" classification by the Board of British Film Censors, too many children see exactly the same films as grown-ups.

Every week hundreds of thousands of British children attend the Saturday Morning Cinema. Is the effect of these film shows good, harmless or bad? When I discovered that over 60 per cent. of the children in my school went to the Saturday Morning Cinema regularly I decided that it was my duty to try and find out what effect it was having on their education, so through the courtesy of the local cinema manager, I attended a number of the Saturday morning shows.

In order to do this research thoroughly I needed two groups of children, one group which attended the cinema on Saturday morning only, and another group which did not go to the

cinema at all. Needless to say I was unable to find such groups, for all the children attended the cinema at some time or other and those who went on Saturday morning usually went at other times as well. I therefore had to content myself with making an examination of the films shown, and by careful questioning attempt to assess their effect upon my children. I also discussed the matter with parents, teachers, the superintendent of police, the probation officer, the school nurse and members of the staff of the local Child Guidance Clinic.

My research was carried out at the Odeon Club, the organisers of which lay down certain rules for their members. These rules are printed in a booklet called "Aims and Objects." Here is a summary, without comment, of what it says :—

"The future depends on the training of our children, especially at the present time when so many children have suffered because of the war from lack of parental control. The schools cannot carry out this training alone. 'The cinema is the most powerful potential medium we have for imparting knowledge and influencing behaviour in the juvenile.'

"In the past, any influence for good in the cinema has been accidental, the only object being to provide entertainment. The Committee of the Odeon National Cinema Club realises this and understands its responsibility in providing films every week for thousands of children. Therefore they try to help in moulding the children's characters by instilling into them thoughtfulness for others, honesty, sportsmanship, loyalty and pride for their country. But the child must be kept *interested* and the organisers 'make certain that everything even remotely resembling the atmosphere of the school-room is eliminated from the film fare provided and indeed from any part of the proceedings.'

“ Programmes should be arranged so that the children spend ‘a sociable and entertaining couple of hours,’ having their minds and behaviour influenced without knowing it. ‘Uplift with a Smile,’ is the keynote of the Club.

“ At Club meetings, children should be made to feel that they are all members of one large family, ‘and that their co-operation and mutual service will help to restore to this country of ours that greatness of spirit and dignity of soul we once feared she had lost.’ The meeting should be opened with community singing, and as this ends, the National Anthem sung, while a special trailer is flashed on the screen.

“ On joining the Club, children should undertake to carry out the Promise which should be repeated after the Manager (known as the Club Chief) each week.

I promise to tell the truth, to help others and to obey my parents.

I promise to be thoughtful of old folks, to be kind to animals and always play the game.

I promise to try and make this great country of ours a better place to live in.

“ To encourage personal hygiene, road safety, etc., slides should be shown, but only two or three, so that the children will not be bored.

“ A children’s committee should be appointed at each theatre, the members acting as ‘stewards’ directing children to their seats, seeing them out at the end of the film, and visiting sick members. Books should be collected for distribution to Club members who are sick. A member is allowed a free ticket to the Club on his or her birthday.

“ ‘Prominent local personalities like the Chief of Police, Clerk to Education Authority, R.A.F. Officer, etc.’ should be asked to give short talks.

“ Films should be carefully chosen so that nothing undesirable appears on the screen. The ‘ programme consists of a cartoon, a full-length feature and one episode from a serial.’

“ The full-length feature is to be usually of the cowboy type because it gives ‘ healthy entertainment where the moral pointed is always a good one. Right invariably triumphs in the end. The serial, too, is always to be an adventure story in which wickedness inevitably meets with the punishment it deserves.’

“ In addition there should be included in every programme a film of educational or interest value.

“ Regular competitions should be held, the children writing essays about the films they have seen. The prize should be Savings Stamps.”

As few parents and teachers know what takes place at the Saturday Morning Cinema, I give a detailed account of the first programme I saw. The weather was good and approximately 800 children attended :—

I visited the Odeon National Cinema Club for the first time to-day. As I came into the town I saw crowds of children ranging in age from about three to fifteen years, making their way towards the cinema. Two noisy chattering queues of children were being admitted. One queue was for the children who paid ninepence to go “ upstairs,” while the other was for the children who paid sixpence to go “ downstairs.”

The normal cinema staff admitted the children in batches, while further supervision was carried out by older boys and girls who wore armbands and rejoiced in the title of “ marshal.”

I had a chat with the cinema manager and was shown to a seat in the circle.

It was now 9.45 a.m. and the noise and movement of the children was reasonable. The loud speakers were braying the

latest popular songs, but no one seemed to be paying any attention to them.

A few minutes later the manager appeared on the stage and, speaking through a microphone, asked: "Are you all happy?" He was answered with a moderately enthusiastic "Yes." Then he announced that he wanted to begin a new custom—the singing of songs before the show began. A pianist played the accompaniment and the manager struck up "Roll out the Barrel"; there was a poor response and a few catcalls. "It's a Grand Day for Singing" and "There'll always be an England" were tried with similar results. "Pack up Your Troubles" was sung with gusto. The words of "The Safety Walk," sung to the tune of "The Lambeth Walk," were then flashed on the screen and the children sang quite heartily.

It was interesting to notice that when the manager reproved some of the children for noisiness, they did become quieter.

The manager left the stage and more records were played. The children got more and more noisy and restless until 10 o'clock, when the lights went out and Donald Duck in "The Flying Jallopy" appeared on the screen. This was hailed with shouts of delight.

Donald Duck buys an aeroplane from a villainous old crow, who tries to get rid of Donald by flying after him and wrecking the aeroplane. From the comments and cheers the children seemed to enjoy most of this.

The lights were switched on and the manager again appeared on the stage. He announced that next week there was to be a "Hopalong Cassidy" cowboy picture; this news was greeted with cheers. The manager then said that some of the seats had been damaged in the circle and appealed to the children to be more careful.

The National Anthem was sung to the accompaniment of a boys' band and choir, pictures of which were shown on the

screen. A certain impatience on the part of the audience was shown during the last few bars. The manager and the children, still standing, then repeated together the Club Promise.

An American film, "Calling all Pa's," was shown next. It showed a young father administering cod liver oil, fixing napkins, and walking the bedroom floor. He grimaced valiantly to show how funny it all was, but the yelling of the baby was the only thing that raised even a mild laugh from the audience.

Next was shown "The Voyage of Peter Joe," a film made specially for Cinema Clubs. This was a serial, but with each episode a complete adventure in itself.

Peter Joe is about twelve years of age; he has inherited a furniture removal van and is making his way to Southampton where he intends to sell it and buy a boat. On the road he meets two men, Nobby, stagily old and dodderly, who continually gets into trouble by falling into holes, etc., and Albert, young and commonplace. They agree to join forces and the van is altered and painted to represent a ship. Peter Joe becomes the captain, Nobby the bosun and Albert the mate.

They get mixed up with a country fair and help an actor and his two daughters to overcome the machinations of the fair-ground owner, Mr Grinder. The mate and the bosun are chased through the fair-ground by Grinder. This chase excited the audience and the whole film was followed with close attention.

The last film, Laurel and Hardy in "Saps at Sea," seemed, from the volume of applause, to score the biggest success with the audience. They laughed uproariously at the knockabout comedy, enjoying particularly the parts where Laurel was blown up and where Hardy was chased by a murderer.

The programme finished at 11.25 a.m.

On being asked to say which film they liked best, 70 per cent. of my children voted for "Peter Joe," 28 per cent. for

“ Saps at Sea,” 2 per cent. for “ Donald Duck,” and none for “ Calling all Pa’s.”

This show revealed one very interesting point. Although the Laurel and Hardy film received by far the greatest volume of applause, my later questioning of the children showed that it was not the most liked film. A cinema manager therefore might easily be deceived by this applause and would wrongly report it to the Film Club organisers as being the most popular film.

Subsequent shows followed the same pattern, the audience varying between 500 and 1000, depending on the weather. My general conclusions were as follows :—

FINDINGS

I examined the films I saw at the Cinema Club from two points of view: firstly, I measured them against a personal standard; and secondly, I judged them against the “ Aims and Objects” set out in the Odeon Club pamphlet.

My own standard was as follows :—

- (a) Was the film such that it encouraged good taste and discrimination so that the children would eventually refuse to see the many second-rate films that are now being shown?
- (b) Did the film add anything of value to the children’s store of knowledge and experience?
- (c) Did the film set a high standard of moral and ethical behaviour, for instance, was there an heroic character whom the children could imitate?
- (d) If the film was a comedy did it avoid vulgarity and cheapness?

The Odeon Club “ Aims and Objects ” list is as follows :—

Thoughtfulness for others, sportmanship, loyalty, pride in our country, improvement of minds and behaviour, mutual service, co-operation, teaching of hygiene, etc.

Using my own standard I came to the following conclusions :

With regard to (a) not one of the films I saw came anywhere near fulfilling these conditions. Two hundred and fifty special films have been made for children in recent times. I only hope that some of them have these objectives in mind.

As regards (b), one film—"Club Magazine," showed pictures of a boy and girl gathering and cleaning sheep's wool, a man making dolls, and a pet show. Another film showed pictures painted by Club members being judged by Dame Laura Knight. In these the photography was inferior, but nevertheless the audience listened attentively. I doubt whether the children acquired any valuable experience from the films shown.

With regard to (c), no film fulfilled these conditions, but "The Adventures of Peter Joe," the special film made for Cinema Clubs, showed possibilities. Peter Joe himself behaved well consistently, but the other characters in the film were not above criticism.

The cowboy film, "The Leather Burners," might have been expected to pass this test, but to my mind the hero used his gun too often to get his own way.

From the behaviour of the children who sat near me, I could see that they consistently identified themselves with characters on the screen; it is vitally important therefore that the characters should be commendable.

(d) "Saps at Sea," a Laurel and Hardy film, came nearest to fulfilling this condition. "I've got a Horse," with Sandy Powell, seemed vulgar and cheap.

The cartoons were for the most part too difficult for the children to understand.

It will be seen that the Odeon Club "Aims and Objects" standard was seldom reached.

MY CHILDREN'S REACTIONS TO THE FILMS SHOWN

Cartoons

All the cartoons were greeted with optimistic cheers, but the final applause was usually much more subdued. Most of them were too difficult for children to follow because they needed adult experience for full understanding. Isolated incidents, however, caused loud laughter, and on the whole interest was maintained.

In my talks with children I found that they all liked the colours, but the younger children, *i.e.*, seven year olds, were the ones who said that they liked the cartoons most. Several mature ten year olds said that the cartoons were "for the little ones," and that personally they didn't like them very much.

In reply to the question, "Which film in the programme did you like best?" none of the cartoons got more than 4 per cent of the votes.

Interest Film

"Our Club Magazine" and "The Pictures you Painted" came in this category. They were watched and listened to with attention. My children all said that they liked and wished to see more of that type. No child, however, voted them the best part of the programme.

"The Adventures of Peter Joe"

This film was made specially for Cinema Clubs. It took the place of the usual serial, but was made in six rather illogical

parts, each showing a complete adventure. Peter Joe, a boy about twelve years old, and other children appear in the course of the adventures. Peter Joe's friends, Nobby and Albert, supply good simple comedy.

The film aroused great enthusiasm ; all my children said they liked it better than any other part of the programme. The children identified themselves with Peter Joe and got a great deal of fun out of the antics of Nobby and Albert. More films of this type have been made.

"Peter Joe" was by far the best film I saw at the Club. Its popularity does show that children have a foundation of natural good taste (the result of good home and school training), which could be built upon, given the right films. In voting for the best film in the programme children placed "Peter Joe" first for every programme.

Cowboys

Only one cowboy film, "The Leather Burners," was shown. It was greeted with rapturous applause and as long as horses were being ridden and revolvers being fired, the children were enthralled, but when the characters got off their horses or began to talk, interest faded and the audience began to chatter and even leave their seats. At times it was quite impossible to hear the characters speaking over the noise. Older children shouted, "Quiet!" but it had no effect. This, I believe, is the usual reaction, and yet when I talked to individual children, I found that, except in the case of one girl, they were all enthusiastic about cowboy films.

94 per cent. of the boys and 84 per cent. of the girls attending the Club said that they liked cowboy films ; 65 per cent. of these boys and 5 per cent. of these girls said that their favourite game was Cowboys and Indians.

Boys said that they liked cowboy films because :—

“ There is more shooting in them.”

“ They are hunting for Indians.”

“ They have guns on them.”

“ I like it when the Indians torture the cowboys and mounties.”

“ They are exciting and thrilling.”

“ There is a lot of shooting and riding.”

Girls said :—

“ I like to see a picture of Cowboys and Indians because I like to see the horses and like to hear the cowboys singing.”

“ I am fond of animals and I like to see the horses galloping on the pathway.”

“ I like shooting.”

“ I like cowboys because they are so clever at shooting and riding horses.”

“ Cowboys and Indians ” is the most popular boys’ game in the school yard. Occasionally I have trouble with gangs of boys attacking individuals ; this is due to a stage in their natural development, but whether the bad aspects are aggravated by seeing films, I do not know.

When “ The Leather Burners ” was shown, 42.6 per cent. of the children voted it the best film in the programme.

Comedies

Laurel and Hardy in “ Saps at Sea ” caused uproarious laughter and applause.

In spite of this noisy appreciation, only 29 per cent. of my children voted it the best film in the programme.

Sandy Powell in “ I’ve got a Horse ” was vulgar and sentimental, but the children said that they “ liked the bit about the horse.” 26.2 per cent of my children voted it the best film in the programme.

A typical comment came from a boy who said that he liked comedies "because they are very exciting and you are always guessing what is coming next."

Other Films Shown

These were both American films dealing with the "teen age group."

"Date with an Angel," with its background of luxurious furnishings, encouraged wishful thinking and implied approval of jive, while despising classical music and traditionally decent behaviour.

13 per cent of my children (all girls) voted it the best film in the programme.

"Annie Rooney" also implied approval of jive and again a luxuriously furnished apartment was in the background. In addition, father Rooney acquires a fortune in real wishful-film fashion.

4.2 per cent. of my children (all girls) voted this the best film of the programme.

General Comments on Films Shown

On the whole the choice of film was poor; it seemed to me that the people who make up the programmes work something like this. They put in a cartoon (any one will do as long as it is coloured), a Club Magazine occasionally, and a serial ("Peter Joe" was exceptionally good; the usual serials are quite different). Then they put in a cowboy film, if there is one handy; if there is not, anything that is supposed to be a comedy or has children in it will serve.

In all the programmes I saw, the two American films were the only ones that I could say were really harmful, but the

quality of the rest was not high and did little towards achieving the avowed objects of the Cinema Club.

Possible Bad Effects on the Children

It seemed to me that the greatest danger inherent in the Cinema Club was that the children sat and listened passively; the entertainment needed no effort on their part and they had no opportunity to execute discrimination.

My questions tended to show that superficially they "liked" everything, thus showing a disturbing lack of discrimination.

Nevertheless, it is my belief, and this enquiry tends to prove it, that children have good taste (due to home and school training) and the danger is that this good taste will be ruined by poor films.

Another danger is exposed by an aside from one of my eleven-year-old girls, who, in reply to my question, "Do you think you have ever learned anything from the films?" replied, "We come to school to learn, we don't go to the pictures for that." A similar opinion has been expressed by various adults with whom I have discussed this enquiry; they forget that a child learns unconsciously.

In answer to the question, "Why are you a member of the Odeon Club?" I got the following answers :—

		<i>Boys</i> per cent.	<i>Girls</i> per cent.
" I like going to the pictures "	-	75	69
" I have nothing to do "	- -	15	13
" My Mum wants me out of the way "	- - - - -	10	18

The non-members of the Odeon Club, in answer to the question, "Why are you not a member of the Club?" said:—

	<i>Boys</i> per cent.	<i>Girls</i> per cent.
" My Mum does not like me going "	4	9
" I do the shopping on Saturday "	23	27
No reason given - - -	73	64

There is no doubt that when the weather is fine it would be better for the children to be out in the sunshine and fresh air ; but it is unlikely that two hours a week in the cinema on Saturday morning will do country children much harm. Two girls said that the pictures made their eyes hurt and one said that the noise made her head ache.

The only film which had frightening incidents was " The Leather Burners," which showed a small boy lost in an old mine in which a madman lived. Certain incidents in the cartoons too might have frightened the smaller children. None of the children said that these particular incidents had frightened them, but when I asked how many of my children had ever had " bad dreams " after seeing a frightening film, the percentage who said " yes," was as follows:—

Odeon Club Members		Non-Members	
<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
per cent.	per cent.	per cent.	per cent.
58	57	54	73

I suspect that some children would not admit to having such dreams.

I discussed the possible bad effects of the films with parents, teachers, the police superintendent, the probation officer, the school nurse and members of the staff of the Child Guidance Clinic. The general conclusion was that the normal healthy child whose home life was reasonably good did not seem to be affected by the films. Emotionally unstable and maladjusted

children might be affected. The police superintendent felt that gangster films had a bad effect on boys. All agreed that given the right films, the Cinema Club could be of positive value.

Is there a danger of the children's language being debased by the adoption of the less desirable Americanisms? Written and oral work in my school do reveal the use of Americanisms, and observation of the children's games in the playground shows that when the boys are playing "Cowboys and Indians" or "Gangsters," they do use expressions which they have learned from American films. One teacher maintained that such films taught slovenly speech. The effect on individuals varies widely; it is pronounced in some boys, but the girls seem to be hardly affected at all. The effect on children over Junior School age is much more marked.

Club Activities

As far as I could see the Club Stewards carried out their duties faithfully. They have a Committee Meeting each Friday, when competitions and marshalling duties are discussed. I have no direct knowledge of how effectively this works. On the face of it, it would seem that these marshals are taking on a responsibility which should be very good for them.

Two competitions were in being during my enquiry—stamp collecting and a "talent" competition. One hundred entries were received for the stamp collection and twelve for the talent competition.

Community singing included such songs as "Roll Out the Barrel," "Pack up your Troubles," "Here we are Again," "You are my Sunshine," and "Old Father Thames." It seemed to me a pity that traditional songs were not sung. If a qualified musician were employed to lead the singing, it would help the children to develop an appreciation and taste

for something better than the ephemeral songs they hear only too often. None of my children expressed any real keenness for this community singing, but they "didn't mind it." They did not lose sight, for a moment, of the fact that their main purpose in attending the Club was to see films.

Judging from the children who sat near me, the repeating of the Club promise was perfunctory and mechanical. I cannot believe that it means anything to the children.

The behaviour of the children was remarkably good. The cinema staff seemed good-humoured and the manager's even temper and enthusiasm obtained a good response from the children.

Recommendations to Parents

Choose carefully the films you allow your children to see. Films can have a very potent influence because children absorb ideas unconsciously. Their tendency to imitate a favourite hero or heroine in language and behaviour can be an immense influence for good or evil.

Children often will not admit that a film has frightened them and they suffer terrors as only children can. If you wish to see a film which is suitable for adults only, leave the children at home. Of this type of film, one of my eleven-year-old girls said in a tone of great disgust, "I don't understand them." Quite often a child will seize on one incident out of a film and this will remain in his mind when all the rest has been forgotten. This incident, desirable or undesirable, can influence the whole of the secret life of a child's imagination. Fortunately, children have a natural resilience which counteracts most of the harmful things they see.

Children undoubtedly get a great deal of enjoyment out of seeing films, but you will be wise if you restrict your children's cinema-going to a minimum, for the majority of films are so

poor that if they have any effect at all, it is likely to be bad.

If “ The Adventures of Peter Joe ” is a fair sample of the new films which are being produced specially for children, then there might come a time when the Saturday Morning Cinema will really be a place to which you will be able to send your children with an easy mind.

Recommendations to Educationists

It seems clear that the Saturday Morning Clubs are so firmly entrenched that nothing less than direct legislation would close them. Therefore, it is our duty to do our utmost to see that the children who attend get the best available films. Advisory committees have been set up and many new films have been made, but as far as I can see, the effects of this have not yet filtered down to the local cinemas. Cinema managers are, neither by experience nor training, likely to be experts in what children need. I suggest that local Committees of educationists be formed, with the object of advising cinema managers about children’s films.

I would also suggest that detailed research is carried out so that the children’s reactions may be assessed.

* * * * *

A Social Survey carried out in March and October 1946 records some disturbing facts about the grip of the cinema-going habit on this country.

<i>Percentage of people who attend the cinema one or more times a week</i>	<i>Percentage of group which does not go to the cinema at all</i>
32 per cent. of all adults. 65 per cent of children of school age.	24 per cent. 5 per cent.
69 per cent. of age group 16-19 years 57 per cent. of age group 20-29 years. 22 per cent. of age group 50-59 years. 11 per cent. of age group 60 years and over.	

Of the total adult cinema audience, 37 per cent. is composed of young people between the ages of sixteen and twenty-nine, although this group forms only 24 per cent. of the total adult population.

One must inevitably conclude that the Saturday Morning Cinema has a great deal to do with helping to form the cinema-going habit.

Some time after my initial visits to the Club, I was invited to see "Bush Christmas." I found it an excellent film which largely fulfilled the standard I set out under the heading of "Findings." I was also invited to see "The Little Ballerina." This too I found to be very good.

The atmosphere of the Cinema Clubs varies from place to place. In some cases a rigid discipline is maintained, while in others there is a lack of control which sometimes leads to damage being done to the cinema furnishings. Other reports I have read speak of bad behaviour and even hysteria on the part of the audience. All Clubs see the same films but the organisation and running of the Club depends on the local cinema manager.

Mr Mayer in "Sociology of Film" has a very informative chapter on Children's Cinema Clubs. The fact that he was able to talk to the people responsible for the organisation of the Film Clubs makes his chapter particularly interesting.

Mr Mayer points out that the supply of suitable films for children is quite inadequate, so that old and cheap films which are often frightening and harmful are used as stop-gaps.

Serials, he believes, are pernicious because they leave the children in a state of high expectation, poisoning their day-dreams and play.

Mr Mayer makes the excellent suggestion that cinema managers should be assisted in their club activities by qualified Club Leaders.

The attraction of the cinema for a child, says Mr Mayer, lies in (a) the pleasure of a group activity, i.e., enjoyment in the company of others ; (b) the triumph of right over wrong, which satisfies the child's aggressive tendencies ; (c) the identification of himself with the performer of heroic deeds ; (d) the outlet of positive self-feeling which he gets through scenes of pursuit.

It must be remembered that each individual child sees something different from everyone else in a film ; moreover, a child does not completely distinguish between fantasy and reality and it is therefore quite possible that he will believe things that are not meant to be true and vice-versa.

There are two psychological characteristics of the Junior School child which we should keep in mind when assessing the effect of films upon him :—

- (a) *Suggestibility*—the child will accept facts, views and methods on trust because he is overawed by older people and people in authority, and his lack of knowledge makes him unable to question what they tell him.
- (b) The Junior School child is quite blind to the more subtle forms of fallacious reasoning and it is only towards the end of the Junior period that his powers of critical reasoning develop.

These two factors open up the most frightening possibilities when one thinks of the bad films that children see.

Mr Mayer believes that a child's likes and dislikes are not a good criterion for judging films, for, he says, a child can only base his experience on what he has already seen, and these films have most likely been of poor quality. I believe, however, and my research seems to prove it, that if a child has a good home and school background, we can depend to a large extent

on his good taste for guidance. Both "Bush Christmas" and "The Little Ballerina" were very popular with the audience.

What can we do to raise the lamentably low standard of films seen at present in the cinemas by our children? Somehow the makers of films must be made to feel that there is a demand for better films and probably the only way of doing this is to go in our thousands (ones will be no good) to the local cinema managers and tell them what we want. (Protests by parent-teacher groups would be particularly effective.) As long as the present films fill the cinemas and make large profits for the proprietors there will be no change. We should therefore attend the cinema only on those occasions when a good film is being shown. We can only find out about these good films by reading or listening to the responsible film critics. The average newspaper film critic simply relies on the material handed out to him by the film companies. Valid criticism will be found in *The Times*, *The Sunday Times*, *The Observer*, *The News Chronicle*, *The Manchester Guardian*, *The Yorkshire Post*, *The Glasgow Herald* and *The Scotsman*, together with a few periodicals like *The Spectator* and *The New Statesman*. Film appreciation should be taught in schools, and local cinema shows should be discussed freely. Every town should have its Film Society, which could show films that the commercial cinema, for various reasons, will not show.

The rules of film censorship need to be revised and "H" and "A" films should be quite definitely restricted to adults.

Mr Mayer points out that as the state is responsible for the education of our children it seems illogical to allow the commercial cinema to exploit one of the most potent educational mediums. He believes that a state censorship would raise the quality of our films and in the long run believes that nationalisation of the cinema industry is inevitable.

At present American film producers say that the test of a film is "what the public wants" and so they give us sex, crime, glamour, cruelty and romance. They produce nothing for specialised audiences and simply concentrate on making films that will appeal to the greatest number of people and so bring in the highest box office returns.

Bad as all this is, there are serious objections to the nationalisation of the film industry. Coal and electricity can be run by the state, but when it comes to the arts, the state's function should not be to control, but to create opportunity. The dire warning of the Russian cinema should ever be before us in this matter. Russians produced some excellent films at one time but their originality and talent now seem to have withered away under the hand of conscientious officials.

Now let us see what use the schools to-day are making of this highly potent educational aid.

THE USE OF FILMS IN SCHOOL

"The Factual Film" (The Arts Enquiry) points out that the good educational film has unique possibilities as a teaching medium.

- (a) It presents a subject more vividly than is possible in any other way.
- (b) It can illustrate movements and actual processes.
- (c) It can bring the specialist into every classroom.
- (d) It can show accurately the lives of people in other countries.
- (e) It saves a great deal of time and can make a lasting impression.
- (f) It is an excellent medium for teaching dull and backward children.



FIG. 13—Children enjoying a comedy at the cinema. (Taken from the C.O.I. film “Children Learning by Experience.”)



FIG. 14—Children watching a thriller at the cinema. (Taken from the C.O.I. film “Children Learning by Experience.”)

- (g) It could provide the mental and spiritual stimulation of a work of art and so act as a salutary contrast to the films shown in the ordinary cinema.

What advantage has been taken of this wonderful teaching medium in our schools?

In 1940 there were 1,400 projectors (40 sound, the rest silent) in the 30,000 teaching establishments of England and Wales. Most of these were to be found in Senior or Secondary schools, very few, if any, being installed in Junior and Infant Schools. New projectors could not be bought during the war years and the old machines deteriorated through general wear and tear and inexpert use.

The apparatus is expensive, but with the establishment in 1946 of the National Committee for Visual Aids, startling strides have been made. By April 1949, 1,400 sound projectors and 1,250 silent projectors were in the schools. At the present time £1,000,000 is in the process of being spent by L.E.As. But still the supply of educational films is inadequate. Subjects have not been fully covered, so that even where there are good films there are usually gaps which would make it impossible to base a course on a series of films.

Films are often too long and either drag in irrelevancies or try to cover too much ground. Most serious of all, age range does not seem to have been considered, so we find very few films indeed which are suitable for Infants and Juniors. Recently, my school carried out a project (referred to elsewhere in this book), which included farming, local industries and transport. We searched everywhere for suitable films and could find nothing directly useful.

A number of teachers previous to 1939 bought projectors out of their own pockets. Some too, in despair, produced their own films. Many of these films are very good, but a serious

fault is their lack of technique. Commercial producers produce films that have the requisite technique, but show a supreme ignorance of school needs. What a blessing it would be if the amateurs and experts could get together to produce first rate teaching films.

Gaumont British Instructional began to produce educational films in 1934 and in five years produced 239 films, 199 of which were sound films. These sound films were commercially unsuccessful because so few schools had sound apparatus, and therefore the films were printed mute.

At the beginning of their five-year programme, G.B.I. approached various teachers' organisations for advice on films to be made. Unfortunately these organisations could never agree on the final form of the scripts and as time went on the G.B. technicians gave up consulting them.

In 1944 the Ministry of Education decided to commission a series of teaching films of an experimental nature. The subjects to be covered were chosen by a number of His Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, Ministry Officials, and subject specialists. These films are made with sound and last for twenty minutes; they are issued with booklets, wall charts and film strips. Those produced so far are excellent. Since 1946 the National Committee for Visual Aids has encouraged the production of a number of classroom films; these are still experimental but supply a very definite need. The Educational Foundation for Visual Aids, established in 1948, is building up a library of films and has already issued its first catalogues.

For the future there is a real need for a standardised mass produced projector which will cost a reasonable amount of money.

Production of films will have to be increased and as many of the films necessary could not possibly be a commercial

success, they will have to be sponsored by a Government Department.

The National Committee for Visual Aids in Education (which represents the Local Education Authorities and teachers) has submitted to the Production Committee of the Ministry of Education a programme of over 130 projects (mainly films) which have been chosen from ideas put forward by teachers. The programme is designed for use with different age groups—infants (5-7 years); juniors (7-11 years); and children (11-13 years, 13-15 years and 15 years and over). These films will be hired or bought through some central agency and it is being arranged that supplies of visual aids apparatus will be made available for schools as soon as possible.

The Ministry of Education has also set up machinery for co-ordinating the planning, producing, distributing, and evaluating of films and other visual aids.

(The Report of the Departmental Committee on Children and the Cinema, published in May 1950 by H.M.S.O., will interest all parents and teachers.)

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

(a) Do you allow your child to go to the Saturday Morning Cinema? What does he gain from going? Do you think that it does him any harm?

(b) Should we restrict our children's visits to the cinema? What kind of films should we choose for him to see?

(c) Is there any connection between juvenile delinquency and the cinema?

(d) If you were able to influence film production what kind of films would you recommend for Junior children?

CHAPTER VIII

YOUR CHILDREN AND THE RADIO

OVER twelve million wireless licences were held at the end of 1949. This means that the vast majority of homes in Britain are equipped with wireless sets, and that our children are hearing constantly programmes put out by the B.B.C. What effect upon our children is this mass of broadcast material having?

In an attempt to discover something about this matter I asked the children in my school to answer certain questions and state preferences for radio programmes. Although the number concerned was small and the fact that the children were all drawn from a "country" environment cannot be discounted, I feel that the enquiry does give a certain general over-all picture of children's reactions to the radio at the Junior stage.

Some of the children's answers must be accepted with reserve, for questioning Junior children is a difficult task and a large margin of error must be allowed. The children are very quick to accept the slightest suggestion on the part of the questioner, especially if it is someone they wish to please. They are creatures of passing enthusiasms, and things that they like at the moment seem to shut out everything else. They are also often influenced by the enthusiasm of parents, teachers or friends.

It is difficult enough for the average adult to say why he likes or dislikes a wireless programme, so we cannot expect

much subtlety in this matter from children. The seven, eight and nine year old children are more difficult to question than the ten and eleven year olds, for in their last year in the Junior School the children begin to develop a certain critical faculty.

I give below the result of my enquiry into the children's reactions to the "Children's Hour" broadcasts.

The Children's Hour

	<i>Boys</i> 7, 8 and 9 years old	<i>Girls</i> 7, 8 and 9 years old	<i>Boys</i> 10 and 11 years old	<i>Girls</i> 10 and 11 years old
Size of group -	54	42	35	32
Do you like "Children's Hour" Programmes?	per cent.	per cent.	per cent.	per cent.
Yes	68	70	35.3	57.6
No	8	2.5	13.5	5.7
Sometimes	18	25	43.2	33.9
I do not know	6	2.5	8.0	2.8

It will be seen that most of the children "like" at least some part of the "Children's Hour," although what exactly "like" means to the children is difficult to say. Here, under the "sometimes" answer, will be seen the growth in power to criticise with age.

The figures showing that a greater number of the younger children listen are probably due to the fact that the younger children are kept in the house in the evening while the older children are allowed to go out.

How closely children listen to the broadcasts is difficult to say. As one would expect, the brighter children seem to remember a great deal more than the backward ones, but this will clearly depend upon:—

- (a) The conditions of listening.
- (b) The interest evoked by the programme.
- (c) The familiarity of the idiom of the programme.
- (d) The attitude of the other people present.
- (e) Whether the radio is a background noise in the home at all hours, or whether it is used to receive selected programmes.

If the wireless set is in the room in which the family has its meals, it is unlikely that the “Children’s Hour” will be listened to without interruption. It is also more than likely that father, returning from work, will want to have his tea in peace, quietly conversing with mother about the day’s happenings, so who can blame him if he switches off the wireless? This, it seems, happens fairly frequently. When it is practicable, parents will be well advised to let the children listen to the “Children’s Hour” in another room.

I personally believe that there is a strong case for beginning the “Children’s Hour” programme half an hour earlier, so that it would last from 4.30 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. Many fathers finish their work at five o’clock, and if these new programme times were adopted they would get home when the “Children’s Hour” had ended.

On a number of occasions I listened in detail to an evening’s broadcast and tried to assess my children’s reactions to them.

I found that the item which attracted the most listeners was a children’s adventure story. Music, poetry and prayers revealed a tendency to switch off, especially amongst the older children. Serious talks saw a distinct increase in older

listeners. Fairy stories were popular with the seven, eight, and nine year olds and the plays and dramatised stories seemed to have a hard core of regular listeners. The older children were more critical and chose their programmes with greater care.

Although I believe that the "Children's Hour" Organisers are wise to insist upon a high standard from their artists, I felt that many of the items I listened to were too difficult for Juniors to follow. The only real solution would be to have two programmes, one for Juniors and one for older children. If this could not be done on two wavelengths why not begin the programme at 4.30 p.m. and carry on to 6 p.m., giving each age group three-quarters of an hour?

I am not, of course, proposing that there should be any "writing down" of programmes; the quality of the performances must be kept high, but the differences in interest and understanding between the ages of seven and fifteen should be taken into consideration.

As I listened to the "Children's Hour" during my enquiry, I could not help comparing it with the old informal type of "Children's Hour" in which "Uncles" and "Aunts" seemed to have so much fun. Although I realise that on occasions these adults probably got more fun out of it than their young listeners, I feel sure that a great deal of it was communicated to the children. But perhaps the most important thing for Junior children was the fact that they became very familiar with the people whom they heard each evening. This close familiarity with the broadcasters is something that the modern programmes lack and I feel sure that it is a distinct loss.

The modern programme caters excellently for the older children but I feel that the needs of Junior children could and should receive more attention,

It is probably not fair to judge the "Children's Hour" on its popularity as compared with other wireless programme items listened to by the children. A parallel case is probably the popularity of "bloods" and "comics," as compared with "good" literature. Interest in "comics" and "bloods" tends to pass between the ages of ten and fourteen. Is it not possible that if children could only be encouraged to listen to the "Children's Hour" they would develop a better taste in wireless programmes generally?

Interest in the wireless programmes as a whole revealed the following order of preferences :—

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Dick Barton. | 10. Carroll Levis. |
| 2. Wilfred Pickles. | 11. Merry-Go-Round. |
| 3. Itma. | 12. Ignorance is Bliss. |
| 4. Twenty Questions. | 13. Variety Bandbox. |
| 5. Children's Hour. | 14. News. |
| 6. Just William. | 15. Much Binding. |
| 7. Daring Dexters. | 16. Plays. |
| 8. Happidrome. | 17. Appointment with Fear. |
| 9. Paul Temple. | 18. Rocky Mountain Rhythm. |

The immense popularity of the "Dick Barton" programme with children was due to at least three things:—

- (a) Familiarity with the idiom so that the children could visualise easily what was happening.
- (b) The active movement of the characters.
- (c) The children's ability to identify themselves with a strong character.

Familiarity with the idiom was due to the reading of similar adventures in "comics" and "bloods" and seeing similar adventures at the cinema. This made it easy for the children to visualise the situations ; in addition the dialogue

contained only familiar words. The adventures of the characters with their constant movement in and out of danger held the children's attention. Children, and adults for that matter, will always tend to identify themselves with a strong character; this accounts for the success of the Superman theme in the "comics" and "bloods" which are so popular. Part of the popularity of Wilfred Pickles, Itma and Twenty Questions is probably due to their popularity with the children's parents.

Wilfred Pickles as the man who controls all situations is a person with whom the children can identify themselves.

Itma was strong in jokes which appealed to all ages—repetition of catch phrases, cross-talk and speaking "backwards."

Twenty Questions has been a favourite old parlour game with children for many years, and knowing all the answers gives a pleasing sense of superiority.

The "Just William" programme had ended some time before my enquiry began. I have no doubt that it would have appeared higher up the list of preferences if it had been in the current programme. Here again is a case where the children could identify themselves easily with the chief characters, for they are familiar with the "William" books and have seen a cinema version of the stories. For a time my boys' spontaneous play was taken up with "William" games.

I found that many of the programmes broadcast after eight o'clock had a large percentage of listeners amongst the seven, eight and nine year old groups. As lack of adequate sleep and rest is one of the commonest causes of children's inability to benefit from school lessons, parents should give this matter serious thought. If the wireless programme keeps children up, then the wireless programme must be switched off. No

Junior child should be out of bed after eight o'clock in the evening.

I have not been able to discover just how much of the programme the children really listen to. It is difficult to believe that "A Doll's House" (9.15 to 10.45 p.m.), "Gallows Glorious" and "Iris" could be understood and listened to all the way through. "Mystery Playhouse" (9.30 to 10 p.m.) cannot be good for children before they go to bed, or at all for that matter. After all, the producer makes these plays just as eerie as the resources of the B.B.C. will allow.

In this question of what your child should listen to on the wireless you have to exercise diplomacy, firmness and a great deal of self-sacrifice.

What about those parents who like to have their radio sets switched on all day and every day? I am afraid that one can only come to the conclusion that they are doing their children a great disservice. In the first place the child will get so used to half listening that when it is necessary for him to exercise his will to concentrate either on a particular radio programme or on instructions from his parent or teacher, he will be unable to do so efficiently.

Secondly, it is unlikely that the children will acquire the power to discriminate and choose the best programmes. Thirdly, the constant background of noise deprives the child of the quiet, restful atmosphere which makes for the best type of home.

My enquiry showed that in about 50 per cent. of the children's homes the radio was switched on most of the time irrespective of the programme. Parents should be careful in their choice of programme and always have at the back of their minds the thought of the effect it is likely to have upon their children.

School Broadcasts

In Primary Schools where a great deal of the work is carried out individually or in small groups, the radio lesson, being based essentially upon the class teaching method, is not one that Primary School teachers find easy to use. In addition, when the work is being planned it is unlikely that it will fit in with the broadcasts available, and it is still less likely that the subject will fit the needs of a particular class at a set time.

When a talk does fit in, it can be very stimulating, but as the speaker is not on the spot it is more than likely that parts of his talk will be irrelevant and a waste of the children's time.

If a series of talks is deliberately worked into the school scheme it can only be useful if the teacher is prepared to listen carefully and follow up any points that are made so that the children can listen to the following talks without confusion.

I have found the Travel Talks vivid, but more often than not irrelevant to the work being carried out by a particular class.

Stories are often effective, while for the "Music and Movement" broadcasts, I have nothing but praise. I also find the Religious Service of great value, although I would welcome a service arranged specially for the Junior children.

School Broadcasting, like everything else in the school, depends upon the teacher for its success.

In "School Broadcasting in Britain," Richard Palmer says of School Broadcasts—

"... they are in no way a substitute for the good teacher, but a broad and rich extension of the resources at his disposal. School Broadcasting is a partnership between educational and radio resources in the studio and the teachers in the schools."

Perhaps the most important possibility of the School Broadcast is the opportunity it gives for training in intelligent

and discriminating listening. This can be begun in the Primary School and reach fruition at the secondary and adult stage in education.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

(a) Do you allow your children to listen to the Dick Barton programme? Do you think that it has any ill-effects on children?

(b) Do you encourage your children to listen to the Children's Hour? If so, how do you do this?

(c) Do you think that the radio programmes for children could be improved? The B.B.C. is always willing to listen to suggestions.

(d) Do you ever miss a favourite wireless programme because it is not suitable for the children? Is it right that you should do this?

(f) Do you have your radio switched on daily irrespective of the programme? If so, do you think that it has any ill-effects on your children?

CHAPTER IX

WHAT ABOUT DISCIPLINE ?

AFTER many talks with parents I have come to believe that for most of them the words "school discipline" immediately conjure up the picture of a school teacher with a cane or strap in hand. This is not unnatural, for many of us were taught in large classes by teachers who, in self protection, had to maintain order by means of corporal punishment ; not so much because they could not maintain order by other methods but because their efficiency was judged by the quietness of their class.

Many parents too, I find, have a genuine belief in the efficacy of corporal punishment and some even suggest that their child would be "all the better for a good caning."

With smaller classes and the resulting possibility of dealing with individual children, the use of corporal punishment in schools has declined and there are many schools where it is not used at all. Some teachers still believe that it has its uses in exceptional cases, but there are probably no schools where the cane is used to the extent it was twenty or thirty years ago. Opinion has so much changed that there is now a tendency to believe that using corporal punishment is a sign of a teacher's weakness, and there is no doubt that if the teacher is reasonably competent and if she prepares her lessons conscientiously so that there is plenty of suitable work for every child to do, the problem of discipline in the old sense of the word disappears.

But it is not really quite as simple as that. The Junior School child on leaving behind his Infant School dependence on the good opinion of adults, grows very sensitive to the opinion of his friends and contemporaries. This alliance with other children gives him independence from his parents and teachers and he begins to watch grown-ups with a very critical eye, and woe betide any teacher or other grown-up in control who is too weak to gain his allegiance. He despises weakness and will exploit it mercilessly. He responds, however, to those adults who earn his respect through being sensible, firm, good humoured and sure of themselves.

He needs genuine understanding authority, because his mind is leaving the infant world of fantasy behind and is moving towards matter-of-fact reality in which he can accomplish physical deeds of prowess and use his hands skilfully.

He prefers organised games with definite rules and although he has not yet got the real "team spirit," playing with others lays the foundation for a future social life.

My experience tends to show that the majority of children from seven to eleven are not ready for full self-government, and it is unfair to place too great a responsibility upon them. Nevertheless it is important that they should have responsibility within their capacity. They can help to decorate and look after the classroom, take turns at being librarian, help with the school garden and school pets, etc.

If the tone of the school is good the children will obey the necessary rules because their contemporaries support them and they will not risk their censure.

Any child's attitude, however, will depend largely upon his training at home and parents should have some clear principles upon which to work in this training.

What does the word "discipline" mean to you? Does it imply instant and unquestioning obedience? From the much

tried parent's point of view it presents a rosy picture, but what about our children? Do we want them to give us this kind of obedience? If we do, then our children are likely to have their independence and initiative badly warped.

The only discipline which is of real value is that imposed by the child himself, because he believes that the demands made upon him are reasonable and right and consistent with his own conscience.

I expect you will now murmur "Yes, that's all very fine, but how do we teach our children to know what is reasonable and what is right?" And, of course, that is the crux of the matter, for normal children often do things that are neither reasonable nor right.

In a home where the child has complete confidence in his parents' sympathy and understanding a large part of the problem is solved. Children like and respect authority if it is just and consistent, for it gives them a very necessary sense of security and relieves them of responsibilities which they are not yet old enough to bear.

Some parents and teachers demand instant and unquestioning obedience at all times from their children. This is a thoroughly bad practice and many parents live to regret their insistence upon what they believed sincerely to be the best system of bringing up their children.

Under this type of control the child behaves well while he is under supervision, but as soon as he is free he does all the things he has been forbidden to do. Another characteristic of such a child is that when he finally leaves the home which has imposed these controls he is unable to use his freedom normally and often gets into serious trouble.

In the case of a child who is naturally weak-willed, such a regime results in his becoming even more timid and he will

probably be seriously handicapped by lack of self-confidence for the rest of his life.

In contrast to these stern parents are the equally well-meaning and sincere people who decide that their children shall have complete freedom to develop all their potentialities. So at great inconvenience and upset to themselves they exercise no control whatsoever over their children. Invariably the children grow up selfish and rebellious, a nuisance to themselves and other people. And this is only what one would expect, for how can these children learn to live happily in our type of community if they have no guidance or teaching from others who have the experience they lack? They are bewildered and unhappy because they cannot possibly learn our civilised mode of conduct without guidance.

The type of discipline imposed by the majority of parents, however, hovers somewhere between these two extremes, and only too often this means that parents adopt no consistent policy. If their discipline comes to depend on the mood of the moment so that at one time they are indulgent and lax, and at another time strict and unbending, their children will suffer from confusion and unhappiness because they will lack that feeling of security which consistency brings.

Your children, then, must have freedom, but at the same time there must be a certain amount of intelligent parental control. As time goes on this parental control should grow less and ultimately become self-control.

Self-control begins as the child gives up the satisfaction of his immediate instinctive desires in order to keep his mother's love, thus adopting his mother's attitude and so acquiring a conscience. Training that is not based on some sort of love relationship between the adult and the child must be based on coercion, which will lead to all kinds of difficulties.

Self-control, the ultimate aim of our training in discipline,

undoubtedly depends chiefly upon the example set by the parents, and to a lesser extent by the teachers. If a child's parents are able to control their tempers and their tongues, if they are courteous at all times to their children and other people, if they treat their children as reasonable human beings, respect their possessions and allow them, whenever possible, to exercise their own judgment, they are then justified in expecting good behaviour from their children, and in the majority of cases this expectation will be realised.

Children do not know, by nature, the difference between right and wrong as we adults see it; they have to learn it by experience and our training.

If a child does something wrong we should explain to him why it is wrong; but do not make the mistake that so many adults make, never allow your righteous indignation and eloquence to carry you away; your explanation must be simple, short and to the point or the child will lose the thread of your argument and so feel no contrition.

Wise parents reduce naughtiness and disobedience by removing, where possible, the opportunities for misbehaviour. But it is also important to see that the child is trained in making a choice between good and bad for himself. The choice, of course, must be within his capacity and experience, but the aim should be, as time goes on, for parental interference in these matters to grow less and less. Such things as the spending of pocket money and full control over his own possessions are valuable here.

I asked the children in my school how they spent their pocket money. The results of the enquiry are shown in Appendix 4, page 141.

Parents should keep clearly in their minds the occasions upon which they require obedience from their children. These occasions are mostly concerned (*a*) with the child's safety,

like crossing a busy road or climbing a dangerous fence ; or (b) with the orderly framework of his daily life. These are things like times for going to bed, or coming in for meals, cleanliness, etc. These demands must all be reasonable and the child should be expected to keep to them.

There are other things which cannot be made a matter of mere obedience ; good manners and politeness, for instance, must be based on sincerity. Persuasion and example are the best ways of training children in such qualities.

Unfortunately, things like nail-biting, stammering and sleeplessness are sometimes confused with those things which are matters of obedience. In these cases proper medical or psychological treatment and sympathy are the only methods of approach.

Punishments

The belief that a child can be made good through fear is no longer held by educationists, and this has led to an entirely new attitude towards the question of punishment. When a child has, as all children do, carried out some particularly irritating piece of wrongdoing, parents should be quite certain that they are not punishing the child for the external damage, but for the principle against which he has offended.

Punishment should not be meted out until the parent is sure of the child's motive and is also certain that the child understands and knows that he has done wrong. If these preliminaries are carried out the child is being controlled through reason and not by fear.

The importance of enquiring into a child's motive for naughtiness will, I am sure, be admitted when we think back to our own childhood and remember those occasions when we set out on a task with the very best intentions (probably a " nice " surprise for mother) only to find ourselves at the end

in the most dreadful mess. Sympathy and not punishment is required in cases of this type.

I am sure, too, that we can all remember our childish bewilderment and astonishment at being angrily accused of some misdemeanour when we were not aware of having done anything wrong. This angry assumption of the child's guilt by adults is the worst possible approach, for the child is frightened and instinctively protects himself, usually by lying. The result is that antagonism and resistance are aroused at the outset. The only successful approach is the one in which the adult remains calm and impersonal.

Undoubtedly the best punishment for children is to let them put right (if this is possible) the wrong they have done. My experience is that if the punishment is just, the child will respond willingly.

It is unfair to punish a first offence ; the matter should be explained calmly and reasonably to the child and this is often sufficient to prevent a further offence.

When punishment has to be carried out, do it at once while the offence is still fresh in the child's mind. Children forget very quickly and punishment deferred becomes almost useless and might even arouse resentment. Punishment must never be given in anger ; if the adult feels anger the punishment is better postponed.

When punishment has been given forget about it. If it is referred to again or if it is spoken of before others then the child is likely to rebel or become sulky and it serves the parents right if he does.

If you seem to be always punishing your child then there is something very wrong and you will be wise to give much thought to your methods. If frequent punishment continues the child is likely to become indifferent to it. On the other

hand if a child is seldom punished, punishment, when it is used, will be all the more effective.

Punishments, to be effective, must have thought and experience behind them. Too many adults are content, no matter what the misdemeanour, to use one form of punishment only, namely, smacking or some other kind of corporal punishment. Really, of course, they are making a confession of failure.

Corporal punishment should be used seldom, if ever; it rouses fear and hatred and is liable to leave a feeling of guilt which is likely to poison the child's later relations with his parents. If corporal punishment is used too frequently the child becomes hardened and might even set out to provoke such punishment.

Teachers, through long and sometimes bitter experience, acquire a practical knowledge of methods of discipline which can be of use to others, particularly parents. I have found that when punishment has to be administered it is most effective when it fits the wrongdoing and the child. The number of ways that experience teaches one of meeting each situation on its merits is surprising. Some effective punishments follow a general pattern. These are:—

- (a) Depriving the child of a coveted privilege or a valued possession.
- (b) If his offence takes the form of being a nuisance to others, make him spend time alone. He usually soon returns full of contrition.
- (c) Seeing that the child makes logical amends; for instance, a carelessly broken window must be paid for out of his own pocket money, or an adult must receive a personal apology.
- (d) Some children are sufficiently punished if they see that an adult is displeased with them. This should be accepted and the power it gives used with great care.

In common with other teachers, I learned very early in my career that if discipline was to be maintained it was of great importance to see that situations which might lead to disobedience or other troublesome forms of behaviour were never allowed to develop.

Teachers always make sure that anything they ask a child to do is reasonable and thoroughly understood; they also know that if they ever show that they have doubts about being obeyed, their doubts will certainly be confirmed.

Except in certain lessons like physical training, a teacher suggests and requests rather than commands, for commands tend to arouse resentment and resistance at all ages. He also treats his pupils with scrupulous courtesy, for otherwise he has no right to expect courtesy in return.

Children are very quick to detect inconsistency and rightly despise it.

Teachers know what a powerful weapon praise is and will always tend to use it rather than blame.

Bribery, in the form of pennies or sweets or other prizes to encourage good behaviour, is thoroughly bad, for the child is not taught to behave well because it is the right thing to do, but because of the material reward it brings. This makes him mercenary and rouses bitterness and rivalry towards other children.

Injustice in dealing with children is inexcusable. If it does happen it can cause fear and so give rise to lying and deceit. It can also cause rebellion, cruelty and destructiveness, while in timid children it can cause shyness, fear and nightmares.

Parents and teachers will always have to deal with these problems, for it is only natural that children will, in finding out about life, come up against authority. The way this is treated is a vital element in a child's upbringing.

If a child feels that he can depend on obtaining understand-

ing, sympathy and affection, and has before him the example of a consistently high standard of behaviour in his parents and teachers, he will at least have the opportunity of developing in the right way.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

- (a) Do you believe in corporal punishment? Try drawing up a list of points for and against.
- (b) What does the word "DISCIPLINE" mean to you?
- (c) How much responsibility is the Junior child capable of carrying?
- (d) How much freedom should be given to children? Where do you draw the line and insist on complete obedience?
- (e) Should parents always sacrifice their convenience and comfort for the sake of their children?
- (f) How do children come to recognise the difference between right and wrong?
- (g) Do you punish your child for wrongdoing? If so, how do you do it? Is it effective?
- (h) How can parents and teachers co-operate so that systems of discipline are consistent at home and in school?
- (i) Do you allow your child to "fight his own battles?" Is there any point at which you should interfere?

CHAPTER X

YOUR CHILD AND OTHER PEOPLE

THROUGHOUT this book I have tried to emphasise the vital importance of the example, conscious and unconscious, set for the child by parents and teachers. Your child has a strong tendency to imitate you in almost everything he sees you doing ; he will also take over unquestioningly your principles and beliefs.

If we parents and teachers are to carry out the difficult task of being consistently good examples to our children we must inevitably conduct our lives in accordance with some basic principle.

Personally I recommend the Christian ethic and the Platonic ideals of beauty, truth and goodness.

In " School and Life " (Report of the Advisory Council for Education (England)) Chapter VII, " The Moral Factor," gives an interesting survey of this problem. I recommend it to the notice of all parents. The last paragraph in this chapter says, " The preceding paragraphs will have illustrated a fact which is familiar enough to all who are concerned with the upbringing of the young, that the task of giving moral and religious guidance is one of great difficulty. The solution must be sought by the patient and honest statement and discussion of divergent views by those who sincerely hold them. It is a long term, not a short term, problem."

In my introduction I spoke of the development of what I called " moral awareness " in children. This quality, I feel

sure, can be developed in children only by those people who have a sincere belief in some such basic principles as those we find in the Christian ethic.

In no direction perhaps will your success in training a child in moral awareness be more evident than in his reactions to other people. If he is able, in his daily life, to make successful contact with the people he meets he has a firm foundation for a happy life. For inability to "mix" can be, and is, the source of much unhappiness.

A baby is naturally self-centred and it is only through his parents' careful training that he can adjust himself to living happily with other people. We have all met those unhappy adults whose training in this respect has been bad, so that they behave with the selfishness, hostility and aggressiveness that one associates with young children.

Selfishness

Selfishness in children can be due to many causes. The following are some of the commonest:—

The only child who has absorbed all his parents' attention is shocked and bewildered to find that he is not so important in other people's eyes, and finds great difficulty and suffers much unhappiness in trying to adjust himself so that he can live with others. Parents of only children should see that their child mixes freely with other children from an early age.

When a new baby arrives the older child often becomes selfish and hostile because he fears that he has lost his parents' affection and love. Patience and affection are the only cure here.

Children in large families often suffer quite as much as only children. The eldest child might be favoured because he is the eldest; this can make him arrogant and selfishly

aggressive so that he is hated by the other children. On the other hand he might be given the heavy responsibility of looking after the younger children and so miss all the childish pleasures which are his birthright. As a result he can become either overbearing or unduly submissive.

The youngest child only too often is kept babyish by the rest of the family; if he trades on this, he remains babyish and selfish and will tend to depend on other people to get him out of difficulties all his life.

The middle child might feel that he is neglected and become aggressive and hostile or turn for solace to fantasies and daydreams.

A boy in a family of girls is often pampered and given the impression that women are there only to minister to his needs. This attitude is likely to cause him much unhappiness in later life.

A girl in a family of boys might easily be given a feeling of inferiority which will be a burden for the rest of her life.

Children are very sensitive to mental and physical inferiority and if one child is constantly held up as superior and an example to the rest, he will be quietly hated by his brothers and sisters. On more than one occasion I have been able to trace a child's backwardness in school subjects to the fact that his parents are constantly "at him" because he is not so good at school as his brother or sister. The result is that he has developed a sense of inferiority and no longer attempts to overcome his backwardness.

Parents, then, in shaping their child's attitude towards others, must be extremely careful in their attitude towards their family. Never favour one child more than another; try to be impartial and just and never hold up one child as an example to the others. If you wish to encourage your child to mould himself on a good pattern choose an adult or a

suitable person in history or fiction; he or she can be extremely useful in shaping a child's character.

On the positive side of training in unselfishness, do not expect this quality to appear too soon, never force a child to give away any of his possessions, but when he does offer to give up anything see that it is accepted willingly and in such a way that he realises the pleasure his unselfishness produces.

A child's desire to gain adult approval can lead to rivalry with his contemporaries and in some cases this results in active hostility. In families where there is a clever child it sometimes happens that he receives all the praise while the children who have not got his gifts receive all the blame. This can be, and often is, the cause of hatred between children. We can all sympathise with such children when we remember the misery of those times in our childhood when nothing seemed to go right and everything we did was wrong. I can still remember vividly and with dislike a teacher who, when I was five or six years old, seemed to have a particular dislike for me and took every opportunity to correct and punish me. How I hated and feared her, and what acute misery she caused me. No child should always be in disgrace; praise is one of our most useful and necessary means of educating children.

Shyness

Shyness can be another source of misery in a child's contact with others. Shyness and diffidence vary with an individual's nature. There are many things which can exaggerate a child's shyness and unless we can find the cause and remove it, or cure it, there is a real danger of the child seeking compensation in a dream world of his own.

The curing of shyness is difficult and needs great care. If you discover the cause of a child's shyness never speak of it

before other people. It is a great mistake and very cruel to try and "laugh him out of it."

Never comment adversely on any odd mannerism that a child has; and above all, however much you are tried, never criticise a shy child impatiently, or compare his behaviour with that of another child.

Never insist on a child wearing clothes that will make him conspicuous amongst his contemporaries. I write with feeling because some of my school friends still remind me of the oddly-shaped caps which my mother insisted on my wearing at an early age.

If your child is to overcome his shyness you must help him to gain confidence by encouraging him to do things within his power. There should also be judicious encouragement, but no forcing, of contacts with other children and adults.

The development of independence and self-reliance is important, for without it a child will tend to allow other people to shoulder his responsibilities, thus encouraging a particularly pernicious form of laziness.

In homes where the parents cannot live together in harmony, the child's whole outlook is affected. He often becomes shy, hostile, indifferent, resistant, destructive or detached, and he will, more often than not, increase disagreements between his parents by playing one off against the other.

The Anti-Social Child

What can we do with a child who shows anti-social traits at say nine or ten years of age?

The first thing to do is to find out the cause of his maladjustment and if possible, remove it. He will then need alternative outlets for his emotions. These can be found in physical activities like organised sport, games and physical training. He should be allowed to paint and draw and make things and

if he shows a particular aptitude or interest it should be encouraged. Judicious praise will be found very useful.

When the child has been the leader of a destructive gang it is probable that he possesses valuable qualities which, if diverted into the right channels, could be of great social value. Such a child often responds if he is put in a position of responsibility and trust.

Children's Organisations

Children often gain in self-control when they join an organisation like the Scouts or Guides. The activities of these organisations are useful, but even more useful is their code of behaviour, for children uphold it in such a way that offenders against it rouse the adverse opinion of their contemporaries. Children will often obey a code of their own which, if imposed by adults, would arouse resistance.

You should encourage your child to join clubs and youth organisations, for it gives him a valuable opportunity to develop his independence.

I asked the children in my school to tell me what organisations they belonged to. Their replies will be found in Appendix VI, page 157.

School Holidays

The long school holidays are probably one of the best tests of what your home training has achieved. The holidays are very valuable indeed for widening your child's experience. If you can take him or send him away to an environment different from the one he normally lives in, you are deepening and enriching his experience of life. The town boy who goes to stay on a farm and the country boy who goes to stay in a town are lucky.

You must plan ahead and be prepared for anything, go on sightseeing trips, arrange picnics and, if the children are old enough, let them go off on their own. If the weather is bad see that there are indoor activities available. The following equipment will be appreciated by the children: wood, hammer, saw, nails, paints, pencil, crayons, chalk, black-board, paper, materials, marbles and books. It will pay you to clear out a room and let the children use it during this time.

Encourage the children to help in the house with the washing up, making beds and running messages, but you will be wise to keep to a time-table because you will not then have to drag your child away from some absorbing task to do your jobs.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

(a) Do you try to develop "moral awareness" in your children? If so, how do you do it?

(b) How can we help children to become unselfish?

(c) What can be done to help a shy child?

(d) If your child began to show anti-social tendencies, what would you do about it?

(e) Do you encourage your children to join children's organisations? Why do you do this? Have you found that the experience is good for them?

(f) What kind of behaviour on social occasions can we expect from the Junior child?

APPENDICES

It is realised that the restricted environment and the small numbers involved make the following enquiries of little scientific value. However, they gave me a great deal of useful information about my school and I feel that parents and teachers will find much of general interest in them.

APPENDIX I

CHILDREN'S PREFERENCE FOR MAIN SCHOOL SUBJECTS

A—7, 8 and 9 year old boys (52 in Group).

B—10 and 11 year old boys (39 in Group).

C—7, 8 and 9 year old girls (39 in Group).

D—10 and 11 year old girls (34 in Group).

	A	B	C	D
1	Drawing	P.T. -	Dancing	P.T. -
2	P.T. -	Drawing	Singing	Drawing
3	Painting	Handwork	P.T. -	Arithmetic
4	Handwork	Painting	Drawing	Dancing
5	Gardening	Gardening	Painting	Painting
6	Arithmetic	Arithmetic	Reading	Reading
7	Reading	Reading	Handwork	Singing
8	Singing	History	Needlework	Needlework
9	Nature Study	Singing	Gardening	Handwork
10	History	Spelling	Arithmetic	Spelling
11	Geography	Nature Study	History	Composition
12	Dancing	Geography	Poetry	Gardening
13	Spelling	Composition	Spelling	History
14	Composition	Poetry	Composition	Nature Study
15	Poetry	Scripture	Nature Study	Poetry
16	Scripture		Geography	Geography
17			Scripture	Scripture

This enquiry suffered certain disadvantages. In the first place, the subject headings were not familiar to the children because subjects like History, Geography, Drawing, Painting, Handwork and Composition had no clear-cut divisions between them in our school syllabus. Secondly, activities like Puppetry, Dramatisation and Percussion Band were not included in a mistaken attempt to simplify the enquiry.

The more general limitations were the usual ones which operate in questioning junior children.

The younger children found it difficult to state preferences and many of them did not get further than the eighth or ninth choice.

The younger children too, I found, stated preferences which depended upon what they liked at the moment, and this meant that their preferences often changed very quickly. To some extent, of course, the preferences inevitably reflected the favourite subjects of their teacher.

In addition, the facilities available and environment of the school must be taken into account.

Keeping in mind the fact that the ten and eleven year old boys were rather backward, while the corresponding group of girls was a good average, and the seven, eight and nine year old groups also a good average, the enquiry shows, broadly speaking, what one would expect.

With all the children the practical subjects were most popular.

Physical training was probably so popular because the children changed into P.T. clothing and there was P.T. apparatus which fascinated them.

In practice our painting, drawing and handwork were more or less inseparable.

It will be seen that arithmetic (except with the younger girls) was reasonably popular. Reading too was well liked.

History, geography, spelling and composition were probably not recognised under these titles because in practice they were an integral part of our project work.

APPENDIX II

CHILDREN'S CHOICE OF THINGS THEY LIKE DOING BEST OUT OF SCHOOL

<i>What things do you like doing best outside school?</i>	<i>Boys 7, 8, 9</i>	<i>Girls 7, 8, 9</i>	<i>Boys 10 & 11</i>	<i>Girls 10 & 11</i>
<i>Size of Group - - -</i>	43	30	42	37
	%	%	%	%
Drawing - - -	30.1	33.2	31	35.1
Playing Cowboys - - -	9.2	—	—	—
Gardening - - -	20.7	23.2	28.6	13.5
Going for Walks - - -	16.1	23.2	—	8.1
Helping Daddy - - -	2.3	—	—	5.4
Playing with Trix - - -	2.3	—	—	—
Playing Cricket - - -	5.1	—	71.4	5.4
Going to Cinema - - -	16.1	23.2	14.2	32.4
Playing Rounders - - -	25.5	16.6	14.2	13.5
Playing Football - - -	20.7	—	52.4	2.7
Listening to Wireless - - -	11.6	16.6	7.1	10.8
Farming - - -	6.9	—	—	—
Cycling - - -	18.4	13.3	9.5	32.4
Woodwork - - -	13.8	—	23.8	2.7
Reading - - -	4.6	16.6	2.4	40.5
Camping (Playing with tents) - - -	9.2	9.9	14.2	2.7
Modelling - - -	2.3	—	2.4	—
Cigarette Cards - - -	4.6	—	—	—
Playing - - -	4.6	3.3	—	—
Climbing Trees - - -	9.2	6.6	9.5	13.5
Swinging - - -	4.6	—	—	2.7
Tennis - - -	2.3	—	—	—
Ludo - - -	9.2	13.3	7.1	24.3
Hop-Scotch - - -	4.6	—	—	5.4
Jumping - - -	4.6	26.6	2.4	2.7
Running - - -	4.6	—	—	—
Fishing - - -	11.6	—	26.2	2.7
Playing with Meccano - - -	11.6	—	—	—
Hide and Seek - - -	2.3	6.6	2.2	10.8
Playing with Bayco - - -	2.3	—	—	—
Fretwork - - -	2.3	—	—	—
Plays - - -	2.3	—	—	—
Painting - - -	2.3	6.6	9.5	24.6

<i>What things do you like doing best outside school?</i>	<i>Boys 7, 8, 9</i>	<i>Girls 7, 8, 9</i>	<i>Boys 10 & 11</i>	<i>Girls 10 & 11</i>
<i>Size of Group - - -</i>	43	30	42	37
	$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$
Comics - - -	2.3	—	2.4	—
Playing with Model Cars -	2.3	—	2.4	—
Haymaking - - -	4.6	—	4.6	5.4
Machining - - -	—	—	—	2.7
Acting - - -	—	—	—	5.4
Looking after Baby - -	—	—	—	8.1
Acrobatics - - -	—	—	—	8.1
Needlework - - -	—	36.5	—	13.5
Knitting - - -	—	39.8	—	21.6
Skipping - - -	—	46.4	—	21.6
Playing with Dolls - -	—	16.6	—	—
Playing with Ball - -	—	43.1	—	16.2
Music - - -	—	26.6	—	5.4
Sums - - -	—	3.3	—	—
Writing - - -	—	9.9	4.7	8.1
Physical Training - -	—	3.3	—	—
Singing - - -	—	—	—	5.4
Dancing - - -	—	3.3	—	—
Jig-Saw Puzzles - -	—	3.3	—	5.4
Crayoning - - -	—	3.3	2.4	—
Playing Stool Ball - -	—	13.3	4.7	10.8
Swimming - - -	—	—	35.7	32.4
Boxing - - -	—	—	9.5	—
Putting - - -	—	—	7.1	2.7
Playing School - - -	—	—	2.4	—
Digging - - -	—	—	7.1	—
Playing Piano - - -	—	—	2.4	—
Eating - - -	—	—	4.7	—
Table Tennis - - -	—	—	7.1	—
Helping Cowman - -	—	—	2.4	—
Thatching - - -	—	—	2.4	—
Picnics - - -	—	—	2.4	2.7
Playing Monopoly - -	—	—	2.4	—
Milking - - -	—	—	2.4	—
Ploughing - - -	—	—	2.4	—
Playing Billiards - -	—	—	2.4	—
Playing with Rabbits -	—	—	—	5.4
Cleaning out Chicken Run	—	—	—	5.4
Marbles - - -	—	—	—	5.4
Chasing - - -	—	—	—	2.7

I asked the children to name the five things they liked doing best out of school.

The boys, especially the older group, show most emphatically their liking for cricket and football.

The older group of boys and girls are keen on swimming. None of the younger children mention this, probably because they are not allowed to use the local swimming pool.

Drawing occupies a high place with all the children; gardening and playing rounders are also popular.

Woodwork is a favourite with the older boys, while reading is very popular with the older girls.

Needlework and knitting are liked by the girls, especially in the younger group. Skipping and playing ball are also very popular with the younger girls.

Fishing is a favourite with the older boys.

Going to the cinema is not as popular as one would expect and listening to the wireless not really popular at all.

Cycling is most liked by the older girls (the limiting factor here, of course, is the possession of a bicycle).

It is surprising that "going for walks" is not more popular with the older children, for St. Leonard's Forest, which is near at hand, is a wonderful place for walking.

APPENDIX III

GAMES THAT CHILDREN LIKE PLAYING WHEN THERE ARE NO ADULTS TO INTERFERE

<i>Boys 7, 8 and 9 years old</i>	<i>Girls 7, 8 and 9 years old</i>	<i>Boys 10 and 11 years old</i>	<i>Girls 10 and 11 years old</i>
<i>Size of Group</i> 50	40	37	34
	%	%	%
Rounders - 26	22.5	16.2	44.8
Cricket - 38	2.5	32.4	—
Football - 42	—	51.3	8.4
Ball - 2	27.5	2.7	5.7
	Stool Ball 2.5	—	2.8
Jumping - 4	17.5	—	2.8
Chasing - 12	10	2.7	2.8
	Skipping - 42.5	—	5.7
Robin Hood 2	—	2.7	—
Cowboys and Indians - 10	2.5	10.8	—
Hide & Seek 10	5	—	8.4
Cig. Cards - 18	2.5	2.7	2.8
	Hand Stands 5	—	2.8
Table Tennis 4	—	—	2.8
M'ted Police 4	—	2.7	—
	Horses - 7.5	—	5.7
	Robbers - 5	—	2.8
	Schools - 5	—	5.7
	Dolls - 17.5	—	8.4
Racing - 4	2.5	—	—
Modelling - 4	Bees - 2.5	Commandos 2.7	Hopscotch 2.8
Meccano - 4	Scat - 2.5	Stinkers - 2.7	Hares - 2.8
	B'man's Buff 2.5	Parts - 5.4	Shops - 5.7
Drawing - 2		Play with	
Haycart - 2	Which - 7.5	Dog - 2.7	Pirates - 5.9
Boxing - 2	Tennis - 7.5	Fishing - 2.7	Tracking - 5.7
Bat and Ball 4	Snuggles - 2.5	Ghost Train 2.7	Mud Pies 5.7
Milk Tops - 4	Hide in the Cupboard 2.5	—	Marbles - 2.8
Old Grandfather Cook - 2	—	—	Netball - 2.8
Six Letters - 6			Mothers and Fathers - 19.6

The preference for games with definite rules (except in the case of the seven, eight and nine year old girls with skipping and ball) is marked, although I suspect that the boys' enthusiasm for cricket and football is probably influenced by tradition and the enthusiasm of older boys and men.

Other games depend on the prevailing fashion, which is often influenced by films, or occasionally by books and radio.

Apart from "static" games like cigarette cards, milk tops, dolls, mothers and fathers, shops and school, most of the other games are really a variation of "chasing" and to an adult's eye seem to consist of a great deal of apparently aimless running about at top speed.

I believe that when asked to write down the names of the games they liked playing, some of the children either could not find a name for their activity or just could not remember all the games they had played.

APPENDIX IV

POCKET MONEY AND HOW IT IS SPENT

The Amount of Pocket Money the Children get.

<i>How much pocket money do you get weekly?</i>	<i>Boys 7, 8 and 9</i>	<i>Girls 7, 8 and 9</i>	<i>Boys 10 and 11</i>	<i>Girls 10 and 11</i>
<i>Size of Group</i> -	44	36	41	35
<i>Fixed Amounts</i>	%	%	%	%
0d. -	16	19	2	11
3d. -	4	8	5	—
6d. -	12	22	24	6
9d. -	2	8	—	—
1/0 -	14	13	5	6
1/3 -	—	3	2	—
1/6 -	2	3	2	3
1/9 -	2	—	—	—
2/0 -	2	6	—	8
2/6 -	4	3	8	19
3/0 -	—	—	2	—
3/6 -	—	—	5	3
TOTAL -	58	85	55	56
<i>Variable Amounts</i>				
3d.—6d. -	—	6	5	6
2d.—1/0 -	7	3	5	11
1d.—1/6 -	—	—	—	3
1d.—2/0 -	10	—	5	3
2d.—2/6 -	7	3	8	6
6d.—3/6 -	—	—	2	3
1/0—2/0 -	—	—	8	6
1/0—2/6 -	12	—	8	—
1/0—3/0 -	2	—	—	—
1/0—5/0 -	2	3	—	—
2/0—2/6 -	2	—	2	—
3/0—4/0 -	—	—	—	3
3/0—7/0 -	—	—	—	3
2/0—£1 -	—	—	2	—
TOTAL -	42	15	45	44

<i>Do you have to work for your pocket money?</i>	<i>Boys 7, 8 and 9</i>	<i>Girls 7, 8 and 9</i>	<i>Boys 10 and 11</i>	<i>Girls 10 and 11</i>
Yes - - -	41	48	56	44
No - - -	15	14	14	25
Sometimes - -	44	38	30	31

HOW THE CHILDREN USE THEIR POCKET MONEY

<i>On what do you spend your pocket money?</i>	<i>Boys 7, 8 and 9</i>	<i>Girls 7, 8 and 9</i>	<i>Boys 10 and 11</i>	<i>Girls 10 and 11</i>
I save it - -	45	51	36	54
Comics - -	15	13	4	6
Cinema - -	42	22	48	42
Sweets - -	15	11	20	48
Books - -	2	—	6	24
Toys - -	7	—	—	—
Circus - -	2	—	4	3
Fete - -	2	—	—	—
Fair - -	2	3	8	6
Swimming - -	2	—	20	15
Ice Cream - -	—	—	4	12
Lemonade - -	—	—	2	3
Chalk - -	—	—	2	—
Ink - -	—	—	2	—
Sunday Church Collection -	—	—	—	3
Balloons - -	—	—	—	3

It should be kept in mind that the majority of the children in my school are from working class homes. Fathers' occupations are:—Working on the railway, working in the timber yard, working in the foundry, agricultural labourer, etc.

In the fixed amounts of pocket money—nil, 6d. and 1s. account for 42 per cent of the younger boys and 54 per cent. of the younger girls. Twenty-four per cent. of the older boys receive 6d., while of the older girls, 11 per cent. receive nothing and 19 per cent. 2s. 6d.

In the variable amounts, 3d. to 2s. 6d. is spread fairly evenly in the older groups. A smaller number of girls receive variable amounts than in the other groups.

It will be seen that about 50 per cent. in all the groups work regularly for their pocket money. The largest group doing no work for their pocket money is found amongst the older girls.

There are not many things nowadays upon which children can spend their pocket money and it is not surprising to find that so many of them save their money. The lowest percentage of savers is found in the older boys' group; this is what one would expect. The children who save either buy savings stamps or keep a money box. The two main objects of saving were given as:—

(a) for holidays.

(b) for buying birthday presents.

The cinema accounts for the most popular form of spending except in the case of the older girls, where the percentage of those buying sweets is slightly larger.

Sweets are often bought by mother with the family sweets just as "comics" are often paid for with the family newspapers.

Swimming takes a fair proportion of the older children's money, while 24 per cent. of the older girls buy "books" (these are booklets like "Sunny Stories").

Children get more money than the above table shows, because parents not only often pay for sweets and comics but they also give children money for casual visits to the cinema and the swimming pool, and always give extra amounts for fetes, fairs, trips to the sea, etc.

I am convinced that a child should have a set sum as pocket money and that he should be completely responsible for its spending. Variable amounts which depend upon the mood of the parents are bad for a child, as they give him no sense of responsibility and often lead to his not understanding the value of money.

I consider it of great importance that a child should be trained to do jobs in the home cheerfully and willingly, and he should not do them simply because he is going to receive some pocket money.

He should feel, however, that his pocket money has been honestly earned.

APPENDIX V.

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE READING HABITS OF THE CHILDREN OF
A JUNIOR MIXED SCHOOL*General observations—*

- (a) The 9, 10 and 11 year old group of boys are rather backward.
 (b) Very few of the children come from "bookish" homes.
 (c) In the first part of the enquiry I am not satisfied that the different types of reading matter were clearly defined in the children's minds.

Size of Group	7 and 8 year old girls			7 and 8 year old boys			9, 10 and 11 year old girls			9, 10 and 11 year old boys		
	27			35			46			54		
Do you like reading?	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
	very much indeed %	yes mod-'tly %	not at all %	very much indeed %	yes mod-'tly %	not at all %	very much indeed %	yes mod-'tly %	not at all %	very much indeed %	yes mod-'tly %	not at all %
1. Amer. Comics	48	19	33	83	8	9	63	15	22	87	5	8
2. Eng. Comics	78	18	4	86	11	3	91	9	—	88	12	—
3. Magazines (like Adventure)	59	19	22	66	20	14	37	45	18	54	18	28
4. Annuals	92	4	4	91	6	3	100	—	—	67	18	15

5. Adventure Stories -	82	7	11	97	—	3	87	13	—	70	28	2
6. Animal do. -	63	15	22	69	23	8	61	37	2	59	35	6
7. Travel do. -	33	48	19	69	20	11	37	33	30	42	46	12
8. School do. -	85	8	7	63	17	20	72	24	4	39	24	37
9. Fairy do. -	100	—	—	72	11	17	59	28	13	33	21	46
10. Folk Tales -	82	7	11	77	20	3	63	22	15	39	35	26
11. Historical St.	33	48	19	66	11	23	32	48	20	54	30	16
12. Books about How to Make Things -	70	21	9	88	9	3	69	22	9	72	16	12
13. Poetry -	62	30	8	47	18	35	43	37	20	23	31	46
14. Plays -	67	22	11	60	31	9	76	22	2	44	39	17
15. Children's Encyclopedias	89	4	7	83	14	3	78	18	4	82	18	—

A column shows the percentage of children who are very fond indeed of that type of reading matter.

B column shows the percentage of children who like that type of reading moderately and would read it if it was available.

C column shows the percentage of children who definitely dislike that particular type of reading matter.

The order of preference thus indicated is as follows :—

Preference	7 and 8 year old girls	7 and 8 year old boys	9, 10 and 11 year old girls	9, 10 and 11 year old boys
1	Fairy Tales	Adventure Stories	Annuals	English Comics
2	Annuals	Annuals	English Comics	American Comics
3	Children's Encyclopedias	How to Make Things	Adventure Stories	Children's Encyclopedias
4	School Stories	English Comics	Children's Encyclopedias	How to Make Things
5	Adventure Stories	American Comics	Plays	Adventure Stories
6	Folk Tales	Children's Encyclopedias	School Stories	Annuals
7	English Comics	Folk Tales	How to Make Things	Animal Stories
8	How to Make Things	Fairy Tales	American Comics	Magazines
9	Plays	Animal Stories	Folk Tales	Historical Stories
10	Poetry	Travel Stories	Animal Tales	Plays
11	Animal Stories	Magazines	Fairy Tales	Travel Stories
12	Magazines	Historical Stories	Poetry	School Stories
13	American Comics	School Stories	Travel Stories	Folk Tales
14	Travel Stories	Plays	Magazines	Fairy Tales
15	Historical Stories	Poetry	Historical Stories	Poetry

The order in which the reading matter is most disliked is as follows :—

Order	7 and 8 year old girls	7 and 8 year old boys	9, 10 and 11 year old girls	9, 10 and 11 year old boys
	⁰ / ₀	⁰ / ₀	⁰ / ₀	⁰ / ₀
1	American Comics 33	Poetry - 35	Travel Stories - 30	Poetry - 46
2	Magazines - 22	Historical Stories 23	American Comics 22	Fairy Tales - 46
3	Animal Stories - 22	School Stories - 20	Historical Stories 20	School Stories - 37
4	Travel Stories - 19	Fairy Stories - 17	Poetry - 20	Magazines - 28
5	Historical Stories 19	Magazines - 14	Magazines - 18	Folk Tales - 26
6	Adventure Stories 11	Travel Stories - 11	Folk Tales - 15	Plays - 17
7	Folk Tales - 11	American Comics 9	Fairy Tales - 13	Historical Stories 16
8	Plays - 11	Plays - 9	How to Make Things - 9	Annuals - 15
9	How to Make Things - 9	Animal Stories - 8	School Stories - 4	Travel Stories - 12
10	Poetry - 8	English Comics - 3	Children's Encyclopedias - 4	How to Make Things - 12
11	Children's Encyclopedias - 7	Annuals - 3	Plays - 2	American Comics 8
12	School Stories - 7	Adventure Stories 3	Animals - 2	Animal Stories - 2
13	English Comics - 4	Folk Tales - 3	English Comics - 0	Adventure Stories 2
14	Annuals - 4	How to Make Things - 3	Annuals - 0	English Comics - 0
15	Fairy Stories - 0	Children's Encyclopedias - 3	Adventure Stories 0	Children's Encyclopedias - 0

In the case of the seven and eight year old girls the popularity of Fairy Tales confirms the findings of other research.

The Annuals, with their vivid highly-coloured pictures and varied articles and short stories (some, the minority, of quite a high literary standard) have an obvious attraction for children.

The liking for Children's Encyclopedias is no doubt due to the pictures they contain, but this liking is one that should be exploited in the children's interest.

School stories, adventure stories, and folk tales show an understandable popularity.

English comics come surprisingly low on the list, although the actual percentage (78 per cent.) is high.

Books on "How to Make Things" are higher up the list than one would expect with small girls.

It is interesting to see American comics so low on the list; this is probably because the better type of American comic is unknown to the children.

Both the historical and travel stories were, I feel, inadequately defined to the children, and this probably accounts for their low position in preference.

In the percentages showing dislikes, the American comic probably comes first for the reason already given.

Magazines (like "Adventure") are not likely to interest little girls. The dislike of animal stories is difficult to explain. It might possibly have been influenced by stories recently read to, or by, the children.

In the case of the seven and eight year old boys, the popularity of the adventure story and "How to Make Things" is true to type. The Annuals are popular for the reasons already given. The popularity of the English and American comics, with their emphasis on adventure, is to be expected. The popularity of the Children's Encyclopedias should be noted and exploited for useful ends. The Fairy Tale, Folk Tale and Animal Stories are lower on the list than one would expect.

In the list of most unpopular reading matter, Poetry occupies its usual position. This is probably due to the lack of familiarity with the idiom and the boys' growing love of the matter-of-fact. Historical stories and travel stories are probably high

up the list through some confusion over the definition of these types of stories. School stories do not attract seven and eight year olds. The growing sense of realism and the attitude of some adults probably accounts for the position of the fairy story. The dislike of American comics and animals is higher than one would expect; the other dislikes are more or less personal ones.

In the nine, ten and eleven year old girls groups the liking for Annuals is again due to the mixture of vivid pictures, articles and stories which are likely to include something of interest for all types of children. The appeal of the English comic is similar to that of the Annuals. Adventure stories are rather high up the list and the liking for Children's Encyclopedias again shows how useful these can be. Plays are always popular with girls of this age as they give an opportunity for self-display. School stories are at this age beginning to come into their own. "How to Make Things" is rather higher and American comics rather lower than one would expect. Animal stories too are surprisingly low down the list. Folk tales and fairy tales are lower than in the earlier group because of the growing sense of realism. Boys' magazines of the type defined are not popular with the majority of girls.

In the unpopular list, travel tales are high; I wonder if this has anything to do with the girls' instinctive love of home? The unpopularity of American comics is probably due to the lack of the better type of American comic in this country. Historical stories and poetry are rather higher than one would expect. The magazines defined are usually unsuitable for girls. Folk tales and fairy tales, in spite of the growing sense of realism, are usually still reasonably popular with girls. The rest are mostly personal dislikes.

In the nine, ten and eleven year old boys group, the English and American comics appeal because of their type of humour and the bloodthirsty adventures they portray, with the opportunity they give for identification with a "super man" type of character. Encyclopedias again reveal a potential source of education to be exploited. "How to Make Things," adventure stories, Annuals, animal stories, magazines and historical stories are in the order we would anticipate from the boys' interests, but one would expect travel stories to

be higher up the list. The interest in school stories does not develop until a later age in boys.

In the unpopular list, poetry again leads the field, for the reasons already given in the younger boys' group; it will be noticed that with these boys the unpopularity has increased. Fairy tales are now largely discarded in favour of more matter-of-fact stories. Magazines are still too old for these boys, while folk tales are where one would expect these realists to put them. Annuals are beginning to pall, but the dislike of travel tales and "How to Make Things" is rather surprising. The dislike of American comics, animal stories and adventure stories concerns only a small number of children.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

	<i>7 and 8 year old girls</i>		<i>7 and 8 year old boys</i>		<i>9, 10 and 11 year old girls</i>		<i>9, 10 and 11 year old boys</i>	
Size of Group -	27		35		46		54	
Do you belong to the Public Library?	Yes %	No %	Yes %	No %	Yes %	No %	Yes %	No %
	59	41	50	50	76	24	49	51

The nearest branch of the Public Library is two miles away, so the "yes" percentage is high, especially for the younger children. It is to be expected that the older boys prefer something more active than reading. In addition, this group is rather backward.

Other factors are:—

- (a) We have a good lending library of children's books at school.
- (b) There is no tradition of book reading as a major leisure pastime in the majority of the children's homes.

CHILDREN'S PREFERENCE FOR READING TO THEMSELVES

	<i>7 and 8 year old girls</i>	<i>7 and 8 year old boys</i>	<i>9, 10 and 11 year old girls</i>	<i>9, 10 and 11 year old boys</i>
Size of Group -	27	35	46	54
Which do you prefer?	%	%	%	%
To be read to? -	18.5	14.1	6.3	10
To read yourself?	59.2	63.4	73.4	46
Or do you like both the same? -	22	22.8	19.5	43

It is likely to be a blow to many adults' self-esteem to find that so many children prefer to read to themselves.

THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO WOULD CHOOSE A BOOK AS A PRESENT

(See table overleaf).

The percentage of "yes" answers is surprisingly high; if there were more toys and other goods for sale in the shops this percentage might very well be lower. The higher percentage of girls is understandable, for boys want so many things to help them in their out-of-school activities, while girls tend to be more passive and stay-at-home.

When asked to name books, many children, especially the younger ones, were unable to think of any titles. The titles given reflect the interests of the children. Favourite in all groups are Annuals; in the older groups the girls are fond of Enid Blyton and "William" books, while the boys choose the "William" books and animal stories.

	7 and 8 year old girls	7 and 8 year old boys	9, 10 and 11 year old girls	9, 10 and 11 year old boys
<i>Size of Group</i>	27	35	46	54
Would you choose a book as a present?	Yes % No %	Yes % No %	Yes % No %	Yes % No %
Name the book you would choose	56 Mickey Mouse Fairy Tales (2) School Girls' Annual	40 Play Box Rupert Book (3) The Three Ages Robin Hood	76 Rupert Book (2) Toby Twirl Annual William the Conqueror Tiger Tim's An. (3) Book of Plays (2) Every Girl's An. (2) Peter Perkins Puppets Girls' School Book Thumbeline (2) Mickey Mouse An. William the Good Just William Seven White Gates Bunkle Butts In E. Blyton's Books (9)	57 Black Beauty Just William (6) Flame a Horse Rupert Book (4) Daily Mail Annual Boys Books (3) Gulliver's Travels (2) Little Animals Mickey Mouse Boys Modern Book Book of Birds Heather Walter de la Mare

THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO BUY COMICS

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Size of Group	7 and 8 year old girls		7 and 8 year old boys		9, 10 and 11 year old girls		9, 10 and 11 year old boys	
	27		35		46		54	
Do you buy a Comic? Name it	<p>Yes % 56</p> <p>Dandy (4) Rainbow (2) Beano (4) Mickey Mouse (2) Playbox (2) Tiny Tots (2) Chips (1) Wonders (1) Jingle (1)</p>	<p>No % 44</p>	<p>Yes % 83</p> <p>Chicks' Own Wonders Dandy (4) Tiny Tots Mickey Mouse Comic Cuts Rainbow Radio Fun Beano (4) Chips Knockout Rover</p>	<p>No % 17</p>	<p>Yes % 74</p> <p>Chicks' Own Mickey Mouse (6) Bubbles Playbox (2) Chips (6) Tiny Tots (2) Film Fun (5) Dandy (6) Radio Fun (2) Rainbow Tiptop Comic Cuts Beano Knockout</p>	<p>No % 26</p>	<p>Yes % 67</p> <p>Rainbow Film Fun Radio Fun (3) Knockout Beano (12) Champion Chips (3) Wizard (2) Mickey Mouse (2) Wonder Comic Argus Playbox (3)</p>	<p>No % 33</p>

The supply of comics is rationed, so children often have to take what they can get rather than what they want. Therefore the above table does not necessarily indicate favourite comics. I am unable to account for the higher percentage of "yes" answers in the seven and eight year old boys group.

The most popular comics named are:—

<i>7 and 8 year old girls</i>	<i>7 and 8 year old boys</i>	<i>9, 10 and 11 year old girls</i>	<i>9, 10 and 11 year old boys</i>
Size of Group 27	35	46	54
Dandy - (4) Beano - (4)	Dandy - (4) Beano - (4)	M. Mouse (6) Chips - (6) Dandy - (6) Film Fun (5)	Beano - (12) Radio Fun (3) Chips - (3) Playbox - (3) M. Mouse (3) Wizard - (2)

THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO BUY A MAGAZINE

	<i>7 and 8 year old girls</i>		<i>7 and 8 year old boys</i>		<i>9, 10 and 11 year old girls</i>		<i>9, 10 and 11 year old boys</i>	
Size of Group	27		35		46		54	
	Yes % 86	No % 14	Yes % 63	No % 37	Yes % 50	No % 50	Yes % 41	No % 59
Do you buy a Magazine? Name it	Sunny St. (6) Whatever Next Wizard	Sunny St. (3) Wizard (3) Rupert Children's Newspaper Marvel Captain	Children's Newspaper (4) Sunny St. (11) Jumping Jack (1) Korky War Cry	Sunny St. (5) Children's Newspaper Spotter Light Car				

The most popular magazines are as follows:—

<i>7 and 8 year old girls</i>	<i>7 and 8 year old boys</i>	<i>9, 10 and 11 year old girls</i>	<i>9, 10 and 11 year old boys</i>
Sunny Stories (6)	Sunny Stories (3) Wizard - (3)	Sunny S. (11) Children's Newspaper (4)	Sunny Stories (5)

“Sunny Stories” is a firm favourite in all the groups, while the seven and eight year old boys are the only ones who name American comics.

PERIODICALS OTHER THAN COMICS AND MAGAZINES READ BY THE CHILDREN

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	7 and 8 year old girls	7 and 8 year old boys	9, 10 and 11 year old girls	9, 10 and 11 year old boys
<i>Size of Group</i>	27	35	46	54
Do you see and read any other journal?	<p>Yes % 74</p> <p>Express (1) Mirror (3) Mail (1) Picture Post (4) John Bull</p>	<p>Yes % 74</p> <p>Woman's Weekly Picture Post (6) John Bull (2) Titbits Wide World Mirror</p>	<p>Yes % 78</p> <p>Woman's Comp. Everybody's (3) Wide World True Story Illustrated (6) Picture Post (15) Woman's Own (3) Woman's Weekly (3) Express Police Gazette Woman's Friend Woman and Home John Bull Punch London News Playways Blighty Picturegoer</p>	<p>Yes % 60</p> <p>Everybody's Woman (2) Picture Post (10) Detective Woman's Weekly (2) John Bull (2) Titbits (3) Illustrated (2) Woman's Own Flight Aeroplane Express</p>

This part of the enquiry shows the importance of leaving only the best journals where children can see them.

Picture Post is a favourite with all groups. *Illustrated* and *Everybody's* are included by the older groups. The *Police Gazette* and *Blighty* are unsuitable for children, while the suitability of other journals in the list is also very questionable.

THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO READ NEWSPAPERS

	7 and 8 year old girls		7 and 8 year old boys		9, 10 and 11 year old girls		9, 10 and 11 year old boys	
Size of Group -	27		35		46		54	
Do you read a	Yes %	No %	Yes %	No %	Yes %	No %	Yes %	No %
Newspaper? -	81	19	91	9	94	6	97	3
Which part? -								
News? - -	11.1	—	40	—	48.6	—	51.8	—
Sport? - -	11.1	—	54.3	—	26	—	48.2	—
Children's								
Corner? - -	18.5	—	37	—	63	—	53.6	—
Comic Strip? -	66.6	—	74.3	—	78	—	65	—

The majority of children say they "read" the newspaper but how thoroughly they do this is difficult to assess. The general popularity of the comic strip is understandable. The "Children's Corner" varies in interest and usefulness with the newspaper. The older children here show the greatest interest; this is probably due to the greater reading ability and widening of interests.

The boys show an interest in sport which probably reflects the interest of the menfolk at home.

A surprisingly large number of children say they "read" the news. Oral questioning makes it clear that this reading is very superficial. Nevertheless if the percentage is only a fraction of what is shown, it is obviously of great importance that parents should buy reliable journals and avoid newspapers and magazines which exploit crime and scandal.

APPENDIX VI

ORGANISATIONS TO WHICH CHILDREN BELONG

<i>What Movement or Club do you belong to?</i>	<i>Boys 7, 8 and 9 years old</i>	<i>Girls 7, 8 and 9 years old</i>	<i>Boys 10 and 11 years old</i>	<i>Girls 10 and 11 years old</i>
Size of Group -	43	30	42	37
	%	%	%	%
Church - -	9.2	23.2	11.9	5.4
Chapel - -	18.4	23.2	16.6	24.3
Sunday School -	9.2	13.3	2.4	21.6
Odeon Club -	64.8	46.4	59.6	56.7
Cubs - - -	16.1	—	16.6	—
Lifeboys - -	2.3	—	—	—
R.S.P.C.A. -	43.9	43.1	23.8	48.6
Swimming Club -	—	—	4.7	5.4
Girls' Life Brigade	—	9.9	—	40.5
Meccano Club -	27.8	—	4.7	—
Lads' Club - -	—	—	7.1	—
Young Farmers' Club - -	—	—	2.4	—
Ballet Club - -	—	13.3	—	—
Brownies - -	—	3.3	—	—
Tap Dancing -	—	3.3	—	5.4
Boxing Club -	—	—	4.7	—
Arkubs - -	—	—	2.4	—
Stoolball Club -	—	—	—	5.4
Guides - -	—	—	—	2.7
Band of Love -	—	—	—	2.7
None - - -	13.8	3.3	16.6	10.8

The popularity of the Odeon Cinema Club is outstanding, although the only communal activity for most of the children is community singing and sitting together and watching the films. So this is not a club at all in the sense of the children being able to take an active part in, and responsibility for, its organisation.

The high percentage for the R.S.P.C.A. is due to the fact that the school has a branch of its own.

Church and Chapel membership is probably higher than elsewhere, which makes the Sunday School figures surprisingly small. The higher percentage of girls attending is interesting and is probably due to their greater docility.

Cubs are fairly popular, while the Girls' Life Brigade is very popular with the ten and eleven year old group.

With the younger Juniors, clubs and organisations requiring "team spirit" are not popular. This clubbing together only develops towards the end of their school life and reaches fruition during adolescence. In addition, parents do not want young children to be too far away from home in the evenings.

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PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
BISHOP & SONS LTD.
NICOLSON SQUARE, EDINBURGH

CHILDREN, Education & Training of.

